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THE INDEPENDENT

No 2,888

20 JANUARY 1996 (1R 65p) 50p

SFO faces new crisis after Maxwell brothers go free

Call for urgent review of fraud investigations

JOHN WILLCOCK and JOHN EISENHAMMER

The Maxwell brothers, Kevin and Ian, were sensationally cleared of all charges to defraud the Maxwell pension funds yesterday, a verdict that was widely seen last night as a shattering blow to the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), the prosecuting authority during the eight-month trial.

Labour immediately called for an urgent review of the way big City frauds are investigated, as the not-guilty verdicts produced tears of joy and relief in the crowded courtroom. Over £400m disappeared from the Maxwell pension funds in 1991. Many observers were asking after the verdicts were returned: "So who is guilty, then?"

Kevin and Ian Maxwell wept in the Old Bailey courtroom after the jury gave their verdict shortly after 2pm yesterday. Only 10 feet away the SFO prosecution team looked stunned. Some predict the trial could herald the end for the SFO, an agency set up in the 1980s to combat large-scale fraud.

"It is essential, in view of the fact that this trial cost £25m, that we urgently review the way in which these cases are prosecuted, and in particular the role of the SFO," said Alastair Darling, Labour's City spokesman.

The SFO has suffered a series of humiliating failures, including the George Walker and Blue Arrow trials, the abandonment of the second Guinness trial, and the outcry that followed the lenient sentencing of the fraudster Roger Levin.

"This is clearly another expensive and disastrous fiasco by the SFO," said Quentin Davies, Conservative member of the influential Commons Treasury Select Committee, whose report

last year expressed reservations about the SFO's credibility. "Fraud prosecution might be better handled by the City regulators themselves," said Matthew Carrington, another Conservative member of the Treasury committee.

The verdict will prompt questions about who can be held accountable for plundering more than £400m from the Maxwell pension funds. The search for the answers will involve City regulators, accountants, solicitors and banks.

The Maxwell jury of seven women and five men spent 11 nights in a hotel, and 48 hours and 17 minutes considering their verdict. At five minutes to two it was announced that a verdict had been reached. Ian and

Inside

Who was really guilty?
Pages 2,3

There will be some who will feel cheated by the acquittals, who want to see the Maxwell family pay. Yet the acquittals help us focus upon the significance of the fraud for the way our companies and pension funds are run. Robert Maxwell did not act alone. Leading article, page 16

Kevin Maxwell and the third defendant, Larry Trachtenberg, a former financial adviser to the Maxwell empire, returned to the courtroom. Kevin looked pale as the jury filed in. There were gasps in court as the forewoman announced "not guilty" to all the charges.

When the court rose Kevin ran over to shake the hands of all 12 of the jury. As the defendants embraced, Laura Maxwell burst in to court and embraced her husband Ian, who burst into tears.

Kevin hugged his brother as he declared that he was "very pleased and relieved by my acquittal".

He added: "I gave evidence in this trial over a period of 21 days and in his summing-up the judge said he thought no jury had a better opportunity of assessing the honesty of the witness than in my case."

"Anyone who wishes to discover my attitude to the events leading to the collapse of my father's group has only to read a transcript of my evidence. I have nothing to add to it."

Kevin still faces eight indictments brought by the SFO. The agency asked yesterday



Triumphant: Kevin, left, and Ian Maxwell after their acquittal at the Old Bailey yesterday. Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

for seven days to consider its position on these charges, and those against two other figures in the Maxwell saga.

After the verdict, the SFO said: "It is our job to conduct a thorough investigation, that has happened in this case... The criminal justice system has functioned in the way it is designed to do." Earlier in court, Kevin's counsel, Alun Jones QC, said

another trial would not make sense following this verdict. Mr Jones said the verdicts showed "the defendants acted honestly in the worst moments of the group's history. It would be oppressive to seek to try him again at public expense."

Outside the court room a smiling Ian grasped his brother by the shoulder and said: "I have not spoken since I was ar-

rested in 1992. I am naturally delighted to have been acquitted of the charge that I faced."

The two brothers gave thumbs-up signs to the waiting media but neither would comment on whether the verdicts vindicated their father.

Kevin, 36, his brother Ian, 39, and Mr Trachtenberg, 42, denied conspiracy to defraud the pension funds by misusing £22m

worth of shares in an Israeli pharmaceutical company, Teva. The shares were used as security for a loan to prop up the crumbling Maxwell empire, after the publishing tycoon died in the Atlantic.

Kevin, alone, denied a similar charge of conspiring with his father to similarly misuse £100m-worth of shares in another Israeli company, Scitex.

Pensioners stunned by verdict

STEVE BOGGAN

"I trusted him then as I trust him now," said Ian Maxwell as he stood outside the court, his arm round his brother's shoulder, eyes red from weeping. And, in the final analysis, that is what it had all come down to: trust.

That more than £400m in pension fund assets had gone missing was not in dispute. It was the manner in which they were spirited away that had occupied the jury for eight months; and in that manner lay appalling abuses of trust.

The trustees of the Maxwell pension funds had trusted Robert Maxwell to invest and safeguard the savings of their members. When he chose to risk those savings to prop up a crumbling business empire, he asked his sons to authorise their movement. In turn, the jury accepted, Ian and Kevin Maxwell trusted in their father's assurances that the money he was taking was his by right.

It was not. But the jury accepted yesterday that the brothers believed it was.

The verdict left pensioners bemused, politicians angry and law enforcement officers shattered. With Robert Maxwell dead and with his sons acquitted, they had no-one left to blame for Britain's biggest pensions fiasco. Maxwell pensioners, whose funds have, for the most part, now been secured, were stunned by the verdict.

"It sends out an appalling message," said Nigel Spackman of the Maxwell Pensioners Action Group. "Whether criminal or not, there was an

TURN TO PAGE THREE

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MAGAZINE

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The secret life of Dogger, Cromarty and German Bight

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In the Independent on Sunday Sex, drugs and rock'n'roll: first of a three-part series



Why my son will go to grammar school, by Harriet Harman

DONALD MACINTYRE Political Editor

Labour was bracing itself for fresh embarrassment over its education policy after the disclosure last night that Harriet Harman, shadow Health Secretary, is to send her son Joe to a grant-maintained grammar school in Kent.

Ms Harman's son - whose elder brother Harry, 13, goes to the Oratory, the grant-maintained Roman Catholic comprehensive attended by Tony Blair's son Euan - has secured a place in the highly competitive examination for the selective St Olave's School, a boys' grammar in Bromley. Ms Harman is married to Jack Dromey, a Transport and General Workers' Union official. Labour Par-

ty policy is opposed to the principle of selection in schools.

Ms Harman's son was one of the top 90 in the examination, out of 700 applicants. The 11-year-old is at present at a local state primary school, Dulwich Hamlets, in south London, acknowledged as a feeder school for St Olave's, a state school which has opted out of local authority control by becoming grant-maintained. The school is selective as well as grant-maintained, which makes the decision particularly sensitive.

Ms Harman said last night: "This is a state school that other children in my son's class will be going to. That he has got in has got absolutely nothing to do with the fact that I am an MP. Any child in Southwark can apply, many go and admission is



Ms Harman: 'Not unusual'

open to every child in Southwark irrespective of money or who their parents are."

Ms Harman said that there had never been the same pattern in London of sending chil-

dren to very local schools that there had been in other parts of the country. Many of her own constituents in the London borough of Southwark went to schools in Lewisham and many in Lambeth went to schools in Southwark.

She added: "There has always been a lot of travelling in London. It has also been common for a long time for parents in inner London to send their children to schools in outer London boroughs."

Ms Harman said the fact that she had not decided to send her second son to the same school as his brother in no way reflected on the Oratory, which was a "brilliant" school. "Sometimes a school is perfect for one child and another school is perfect for another. There is nothing

unusual in a parent sending one child to one school and another to a different school."

David Blunkett, shadow Education Secretary, told the party conference in October that a Labour government would create no more selective schools.

"Read my lips. No selection, either by examination or by interview under a Labour government," he said. But the party's education policy document makes it clear that the party will leave it open to local councils to preserve existing grammar schools.

St Olave's has a 175-pupil sixth form, with 96 per cent going on to higher education. It is a 400-year-old school which was founded by Southwark pensioners, originally in the London borough.

IN BRIEF

Ferry siege ends
Seven pro-Chechen gunmen who hijacked a Black Sea ferry in a Turkish port three days ago freed their hostages and surrendered. Page 10

Homeless row
The Government is to press ahead with controversial plans to change the laws affecting homeless people. Page 6

Rail cut fears
Labour accused the Government of opening the way to severe cuts in rail services by allowing "lightly used" trains to be phased out. Page 7

Today's weather
Cloudy and cold with rain in western areas. Page 2



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Labour

THE MAXWELL

With the tycoon dead and his sons

Auditors and banks 'knew of asset shift'

JOHN WILLCOCK
Financial Correspondent

More than £400m was missing from the Maxwell pension funds when the business empire collapsed, following Robert Maxwell's death on 5 November 1992.

If Kevin Maxwell, his brother Ian, and Larry Trachtenberg – all acquitted of conspiring to defraud the pension funds yesterday – were innocent of the crime, who was responsible?

Kevin's defence counsel said during the trial that the movement of assets by Robert Maxwell around his business empire was known about by his professional advisers and bankers. It was well known that the late tycoon was "an investment committee of one".

Kevin's defence also said that the use of pension funds for purposes other than paying pensions was widespread in the 1980s and accepted as legitimate. Robert Maxwell had simply used pension fund assets in the way he used all the assets of the group, which he viewed as a single entity.

Kevin said that the pension assets would have been replaced if the business empire had not been blown away by the recession and the withdrawal of bank support.

According to Kevin Maxwell, many of the Maxwell empire's professional advisers and bankers knew about the share transactions which formed the basis of the SFO's prosecution.

Kevin's counsel, Alan Jones QC, said that both Coopers & Lybrand, the accountancy firm which audited the Maxwell empire, and its main bank, NatWest, could be criticised.

NatWest was Maxwell's main banker for 40 years. During his cross-examination of David Leal-Bennett, a NatWest executive testifying at the trial, Mr

Jones accused the bank of having knowingly accepted pension fund assets as collateral for loans to private Maxwell family firms.

Mr Jones said Mr Leal-Bennett knew he was being handed pension fund assets when he accepted \$35m worth of shares in Teva, an Israeli pharmaceutical company, as collateral for two emergency loans.

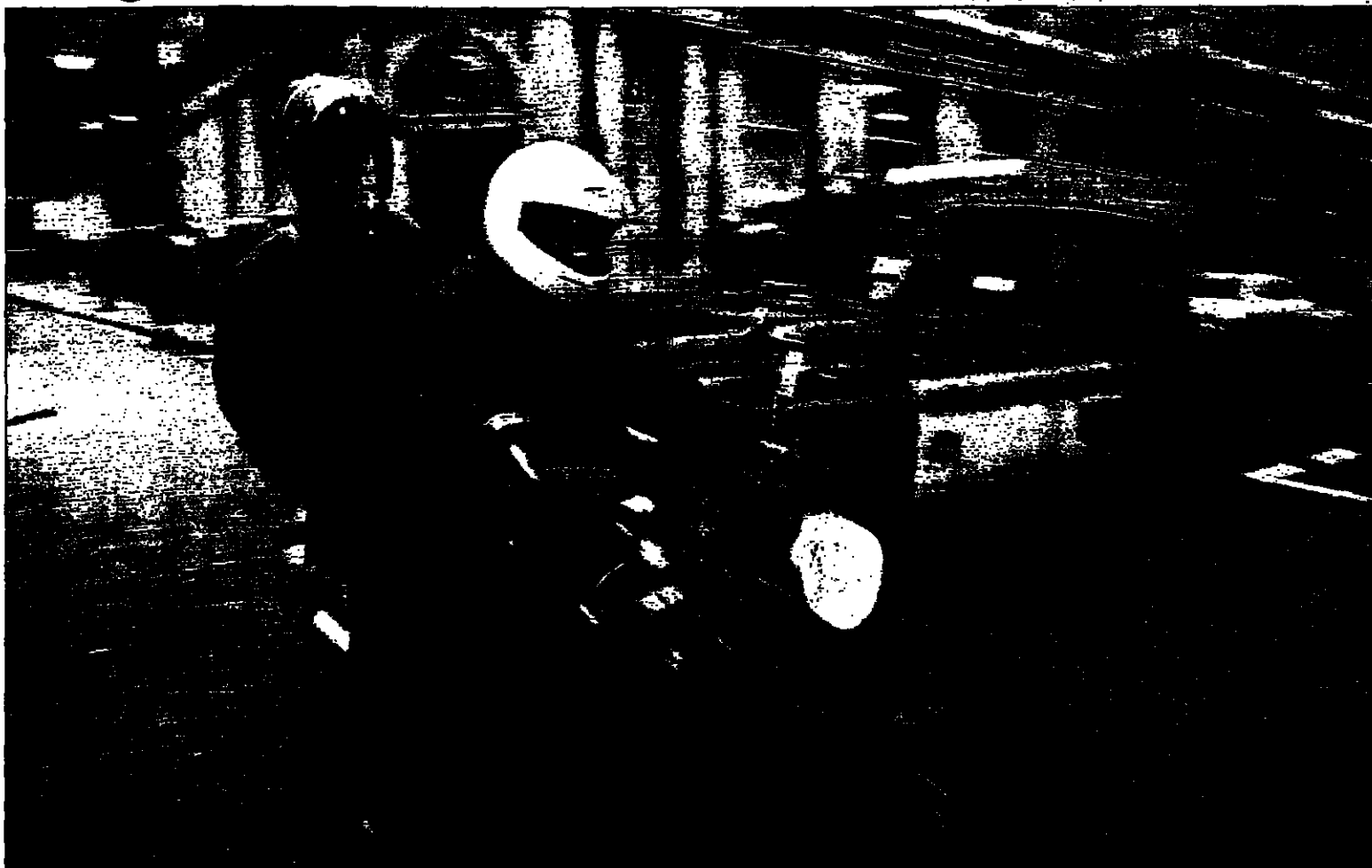
The name of the Maxwell company which managed the pension funds, Bishopgate Investment Management, was printed on the share certificate as the owner of the shares.

Mr Jones said: "I really do want to suggest to you that you knew exactly what Bishopgate Investment Management was. But you cannot say so now because, looking back in hindsight, since the Maxwell empire collapsed, National Westminster Bank does not want to admit, does it, that it knew assets could be easily transferred between the pension fund and the private companies?"

"That is not true," Mr Leal-Bennett replied. "I have nothing to hide. If I had heard or thought that the pension funds were involved at any stage I would have had that discussed within the organisation."

Mr Jones also accused Coopers of both lowering its standards because of Maxwell's dominating character, and of knowing about unauthorised inter-company loans. Coopers audited all Maxwell's 400-odd companies for 18 years before his death.

Peter Walsh, a Coopers audit partner, told the court: "If Robert Maxwell said jump, Coopers jumped. But we do the same for other clients." Mr Walsh rejected Mr Jones's suggestion that he had known about the £90m from the pension fund deposited with Maxwell companies in April 1991.



Easy riders: The Maxwell brothers arriving at the Old Bailey yesterday where their not guilty verdicts stunned the SFO. Photograph: Edward Webb

Outcome adds to travails of SFO

JOHN EISENHAMMER
Financial Editor

The failure to win convictions in the Maxwell case is a stunning setback for the Serious Fraud Office, just as it thought it was enjoying a steady turn-around in its once patchy fortunes. Just before Christmas, George Staple, the director, was highlighting the improved record for 1995, when in each trial during the year the principal defendant was convicted. But the Maxwell affair was the prosecution the SFO desperately needed to win to silence the doubts about its effectiveness and overcome the common public view that it makes to nail small-time crooks but cannot land the big

fish. Now the questions about its effectiveness and credibility have returned with a vengeance.

"This trial has cost possibly £25m... It is now time urgently to examine the way in which we prosecute complicated City crimes and the role of the SFO," said Alastair Darling, Labour's City spokesman. The party is thinking of reform which would hand prosecution of big-time fraud to the City's main regulator, the Securities and Investments Board. The Treasury select committee is also known to have lent towards such an option.

It is less than a year since the Government held up its hand to this controversy and gave a

powerful expression of faith in the SFO's future. There had been a full review of its activities in Britain and the mechanism for dealing with complex fraud, prompted by the string of acquittals which made the SFO's record of an average conviction rate of 70 per cent in its first seven years look probably worse than it was.

The high-profile costly failures over George Walker and Blue Arrow, the abandonment of the second Guinness trial and the outcry following the lenient sentencing of Roger Levitt, had left the SFO's reputation seriously compromised.

In March 1995 the Government concluded that, for all its faults, there was no better alternative to the SFO. Fully ac-

cepting the recommendations of the Davies report, it gave the SFO not just a reprieve, but agreed it should be reinforced as the centre of expertise for all big fraud cases, with a larger specialised staff taking on a greater workload.

The SFO has long argued as mitigating circumstances that fraud, because of its considerable technical complexity, is an inappropriate matter for trial by jury. But there continues to be considerable official reluctance to breaking with the jury tradition. "The problem is clearly not the jury system, for the Americans, with their far better record, have juries, too. I am always depressed when prosecutors and the lawyers they brief seek to blame their

failures on the British jury," said Quentin Davies, Tory member of the Commons Treasury select committee, whose report last year sharply criticised the SFO.

For Mr Staple, this latest embarrassment caps what has turned into an unhappy period of stewardship. Last summer he came close to resigning as a consequence of new revelations that cast a poor light on him, and the SFO's handling of the Levitt fiasco, including an admission that he had misled the Commons Treasury committee in its investigation into the matter. The SFO was also frequently criticised last year for its apparent reluctance to pursue more rigorously its investigation into the collapse of Barings, the merchant bank.



Larry Trachtenberg: Former financial adviser



Robert Burns: Released from the trial after heart attack

Meltdown that was etched into pension lore

The meltdown of 3 December 1991 has etched itself into British pensioners' lore. That evening, at the headquarters of Robert Maxwell's old Mirror Group in London, his son Kevin told the assembled 40 trustees of all the Maxwell Group pension funds that more than £400m was "missing" out of the £750m supposed to be there, writes John Eisenhower.

Suddenly, 32,000 pensioners faced at best grave uncertainty, and at worst the complete loss of their retirement security. One of the nine Maxwell group pension funds now actually owed

money, while the Mirror Group Newspapers pension fund, the most important, should have had £450m but instead could identify just under £100m.

No one in the desperate days of early 1992 would have dared to suggest that in just three years all nine schemes would have recovered funds enough to be able to meet their liabilities. As irate pensioners laid legal siege to the pension funds in the early days, the first act in the rescue was an attempt to restore confidence by replacing all the

trustees looking after the funds. Mirror Group Newspapers, as the only survivor of the Maxwell companies, pledged that everybody in their scheme, amounting to some 14,000 pensioners, would be all right, even though at the time they had no idea how.

The sums involved were so huge that Mirror Group reached agreement with the fund trustees that it would repay the missing money over a period of 14 years. In all, this would have incurred repayments of £460m.

But it never came to that. One way or another, all the pen-

sions of the nine Maxwell funds were paid, although in the early period it was only through a belt-and-braces combination of City, company and government assistance.

In the early stages of the crisis, under the Government's aegis, the "global settlement initiative" was set up. Headed by a retired high court judge, Sir Peter Webster, it united all the nine Maxwell schemes, both in what benefits they owed, and where they felt they had claims on getting money back. On 31 March 1995, agreement was struck with three City institu-

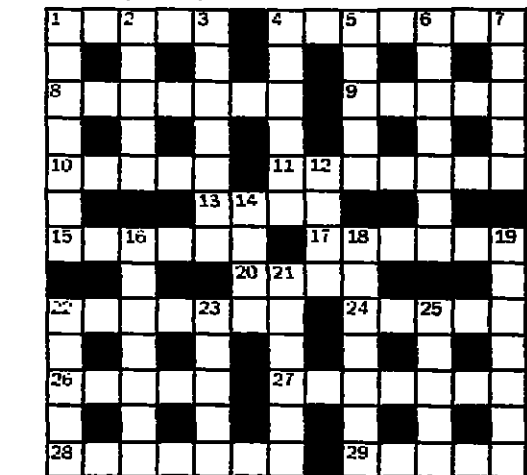
tions, and with some of the old Maxwell companies which were in liquidation, which produced £276m.

Assets were also recovered from other financial institutions and companies, both voluntarily and under threat of litigation. And on top of that, the Government produced more than £100m under its guarantee to pay minimum pension obligations.

Even though the schemes never recovered the surplus they had once built up, the black holes had been filled and disaster was averted.

concise crossword

No. 2888 Saturday 20 January By Pti



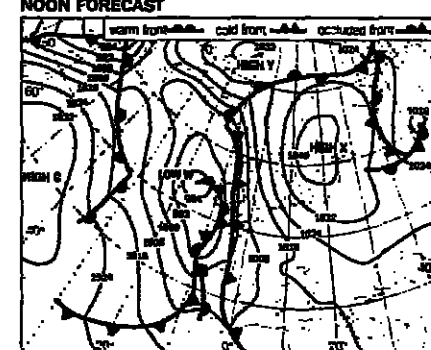
- ACROSS**
- Analysed a sentence (5)
 - Revolved with a hum (7)
 - Stomach settler (7)
 - Arabian spirit (5)
 - Group of soldiers (5)
 - Baffle (7)
 - Nervous (4)
 - Roman orator (6)
 - Coarse (6)
 - Hitler follower (4)
 - Carry out (7)
 - Underground worker (5)
 - Entice (5)
 - Sluggishness (7)
 - Long-distance post (3-4)
 - Old train power (5)
- DOWN**
- Malleable (7)
 - Prefix meaning 'reversed' (5)
 - Prisoner at large (7)
 - Moving through water (6)
 - Native American (colloq) (5)
 - Tress (7)
 - Becomes arid (5)
 - Town-crier's call (4)
 - Stop that! (4)
 - Milk separator (7)
 - Without purpose (7)
 - Naval execution site (4-3)
 - Antenna (7)
 - Surplus (5)
 - Extreme (5)
 - Salt-petre (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
Across: 1. Miscol; 4. Aisle (Miscol); 8. Latin; 9. Pergola; 10. Craster; 11. Que; 12. Top; 13. Kops; 15. Fern; 18. New; 21. Bitch; 22. Overdue; 23. Controversy; 26. Adage; 27. Shook; 28. Centre.
Down: 1. Malice; 2. Sulfate; 3. Einstein; 4. Aura; 5. Shook; 6. Enamel; 7. Spurt; 12. Generate; 16. Radiant; 17. Piece; 19. Worth; 20. Serene; 22. Convey; 24. Jerk

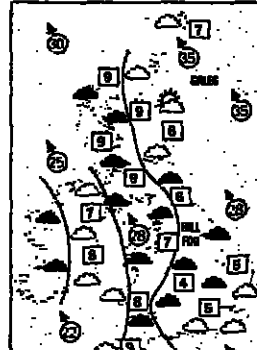
Notes

Weather forecast

NOON FORECAST



High 1 is still interesting. Low 1 is moving slowly south.



TODAY'S FORECAST: Most places are going to stay cloudy, and there will be a rather chilly southerly wind. Showers are going to affect most western parts of the country, but it should stay dry to the east. Tonight, little change in aspect, with a cold but mainly clear sky. A few light showers are expected in the west, but many places will be dry and quite bright. Little change in aspect, though the middle of the week, though some rain or snow could well start to edge northwards.

WORLD WEATHER

City	Temp	Wind	Cloud	City	Temp	Wind	Cloud	City	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	4-10	W	100	Paris	5-12	W	100	Rome	6-14	W	100
Birmingham	4-10	W	100	Manchester	4-10	W	100	Edinburgh	4-10	W	100
Cardiff	4-10	W	100	Belfast	4-10	W	100	Liverpool	4-10	W	100
Sheffield	4-10	W	100	Nottingham	4-10	W	100	Leeds	4-10	W	100
York	4-10	W	100	Doncaster	4-10	W	100	Sheff	4-10	W	100
Blackburn	4-10	W	100	Oldham	4-10	W	100	Stockport	4-10	W	100
Wigan	4-10	W	100	Southport	4-10	W	100	Preston	4-10	W	100
Lancaster	4-10	W	100	Carlisle	4-10	W	100	Exeter	4-10	W	100
Bristol	4-10	W	100	Gloucester	4-10	W	100	Swansea	4-10	W	100
Cardiff	4-10	W	100	London	4-10	W	100	Paris	4-10	W	100

LIGHTING-UP TIMES

Location	Lighting-up time
London	4.28 pm
Birmingham	4.31 pm
Manchester	4.33 pm
Cardiff	4.35 pm
Belfast	4.37 pm

AIR QUALITY

Location	Index	Category
London	10	Good
Birmingham	10	Good
Manchester	10	Good
Cardiff	10	Good
Belfast	10	Good

OUTLOOK FOR TODAY

Location	Forecast
London	Cloudy
Birmingham	Cloudy
Manchester	Cloudy
Cardiff	Cloudy
Belfast	Cloudy

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DTI remains silent

DAVID HELLIER
and JOHN WILLCOCK

The acquittal of the Maxwell brothers raises new questions over a report by the Department of Trade and Industry into the flotation of Mirror Group Newspapers in April 1991; in particular, whether the verdict will force the DTI inspectors to change their conclusions, and when it will be published.

Legal sources had expected the end of the trial to hasten publication. But a DTI spokesman dampened this hope after the verdict, saying: "The DTI inspectors have not yet concluded their investigations, and the Secretary of State does not have a

INSPECTORS' REPORT

finalised report." The spokesman had no comment on when the report might be published.

The two inspectors, John Laughton Thomas QC and Raymond Turner, have been monitoring the trial to see whether anything has come out of it which can be added to their findings.

The inspectors were asked to investigate "the affairs and membership" of MGN and, in particular, the flotation of 49 per cent of the group's shares, which raised £245.5m.

One of the key issues the report will focus on is how the assurance that there would be

a "ring fence" separating MGN from other Maxwell interests, whether it was correct to give this assurance and the extent to which the assurance was used in pre-flotation publicity.

The inspectors are also likely to have focused on whether statements made in the flotation prospectus about MGN pension funds were correct or fulsome enough. There was no mention in the prospectus of the fact that much of the pension fund was invested in companies with some connection to the late Robert Maxwell's business empire.

A number of leading City figures who advised on the flotation are believed to have been questioned by the inspectors.

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THE MAXWELL TRIAL

acquitted, who was really guilty?

'Bully' who never stood in the dock

PAUL VALLELY and JOHN WILLCOCK

There was one man they could not acquit. Robert Maxwell was not in the dock in the trial which ended at the Old Bailey yesterday. But the question of the guilt of the media magnate loomed over the proceedings in which his sons Kevin and Ian were found not guilty of fraud.

The story which emerged over the 121-day hearing was remarkable. The jury heard how the Czech émigré Robert Maxwell built from scratch, through 40 years of aggressive takeovers and mergers, a media empire of more than 400 companies. A "spectacular risk-taker" he turned round companies on the brink of bankruptcy and amassed a personal fortune of more than £1bn by the late 1980s.

For decades the tycoon regarded these 400 companies as a single entity, to do with as he pleased. But when the empire crashed following Maxwell's death, astonished bankers and accountants discovered his pension funds were left with a "black hole" of over £400m in missing funds.

The portrait which was compiled of the man at the centre of this egotistical spider's web was of a bully who imposed his will on his family, his employees and the banks and professional advisers upon whom he relied. He was a man who lied readily and who took delight in humiliating his staff.

But most of all he was a man who manoeuvred and manipulated to an extent which made the heads of those around him spin. No one ever knew quite what he was up to until he died, when his entire empire crashed - leaving thousands of pensioners in penury.

Robert Maxwell was a bully from his earliest days. Kevin Maxwell told the court of a father who could switch from great charm to brutal verbal bullying. "I was in awe of him as a child. I was very frightened."

He was a man from whom his two convicted sons never managed to escape. As the empire expanded Kevin Maxwell, and his brother Ian, were moved by their father from one part of his business concerns to another.

Before long the magnate decided that Kevin, though his youngest son, was the more suitable to inherit his mantle. In 1991 Kevin, now experienced in corporate finance, was made second-in-command and was well-placed to witness his father's domineering techniques at close hand. "The domination was in part physical, part charismatic, and also he dominated by virtue of his success," he told the court.

It was a desire to control others which drove Robert Maxwell. He was a man possessed by business. He had no interests outside: it consumed his life. "He wasn't motivated by money, he was motivated by power - the ability to influence events," said Kevin. "To do so he systematically robbed individuals of their dignity - even forcing senior directors to open mail in the mail room at Pergamon Press."

Power was what turned

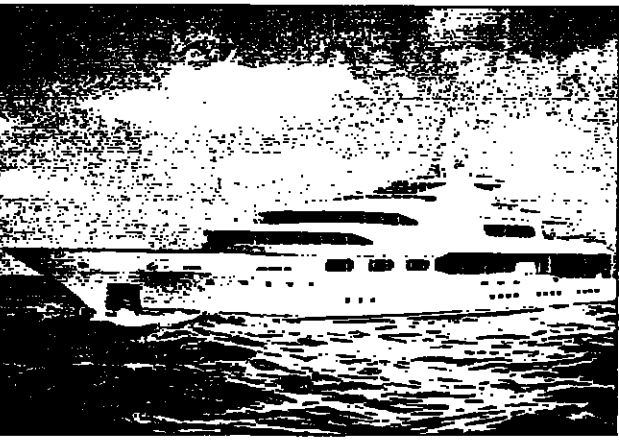
Maxwell on. So much so that he kept as much as possible to himself. "He would frequently take decisions on his own without consultation and everybody in the business would then deal with whatever he had decided to do," Kevin revealed. Even as No 2 Kevin was not permitted to sign a letter, to sign off a deal, without his father's express authorisation. "Ultimately, the decisions were taken by him. Our role was to advise him, to implement the decisions that he gave us to deal with."

For the last 10 years of his life Maxwell appointed himself as "a one-man committee" of the board of his private company Robert Maxwell Group (RMG). The business of the company was not run through the board with the result that Maxwell's unpredictable and inconsistent character was projected into a business empire in which sudden and substantial strategic changes of direction were commonplace.

All of which provided easy cover for Robert Maxwell regularly to transfer funds from cash-generating parts of his empire to cash-poor parts, classifying these transfers as loans in order to avoid having to pay tax on them. By 1990, a total of £683m was owed by different parts of the company to each other.

When Mirror Group Newspapers was floated in 1991 the debt to it from other companies in the Maxwell empire, amounting to hundreds of millions of pounds, was wiped out by MGN simply paying a dividend of the same size as the debt owed to it, the court was told.

How proper was this? Throughout the trial Kevin Maxwell claimed that such inter-company loans were entirely normal business practice, and that the group's auditors and bankers knew about them



Maxwell's Lady Ghislaine, from which he fell in 1991

and accepted them. But the court also heard that Peter Laister, then a director of MCC and a former head of Thorn EMI, wrote to Maxwell setting out the board's worries about the sheer scale of the inter-company loans and foreign exchange deals. Over £100m was outstanding at one point.

Not everyone was fooled. Kevin Maxwell was forced to admit to the court that he was aware that there was a "Max factor" in the City where Maxwell assets were not regarded with the same respect as other media companies.

To maintain credibility Kevin Maxwell admitted that he had

lied to bankers and the pressure to lie mounted with the pressure on the business empire's finances. By July 1991, Robert Maxwell was living hand to mouth. The worldwide recession was hitting his operations both in MGN the UK and in MCC in the US. The third leg of the empire, the privately owned family companies which traded as RMG, had a £1bn debt.

In July 1991 Robert Maxwell chaired a board meeting of RMG, the private group of family companies, which then owed £845m to the banks. One

subject preoccupied the meeting: what would happen if the group went bust? A solicitor explained that once a director knew the company was going into insolvent liquidation he was obliged to do everything he could to minimise potential loss. The directors decided the group could carry on trading solvently if it rolled over debts and disposed of assets.

The emergency plan did not work. Asset sales failed to meet projected targets.

It was at this point that Maxwell made his fatal mistake and pillaged the Maxwell pension funds to support his em-

pire. Some £400m of pensioners' money subsequently disappeared.

The trial which ended yesterday centred around allegations that Robert Maxwell's sons, and their associate, Larry Trachtenberg, were involved in the illegal disposal of pension fund shares in an attempt to prop up the empire.

Kevin was accused of conspiring with his father to misuse the pensioners' share in a high-tech Israeli company called Scitex.

On 4 July 1991, Robert Maxwell had signed - on behalf of RMG - a contract with BIM to buy 5.4m shares in Scitex. Maxwell already owned a chunk of the shares but wanted to sell them together as a single lot to get a better price. There was a key clause at the end of the contract: "Until settlement is made, the shares will continue to belong to BIM and beneficial ownership will not be transferred to RMG." In the event RMG never paid for the Scitex shares.

Kevin's defence during the trial was that the clause at the end had been deleted by his father, so that the transfer of ownership was not dependent on BIM receiving payment.

The jury believed him. The megalomaniac magnate had acted alone on the fraud as on so much else.

Meanwhile, back at MCC Robert Maxwell's fellow directors were getting worried. They began to meet behind Maxwell's back to discuss their concerns about the level of inter-company debt between MCC and the private Maxwell companies.

When Maxwell heard of the secret meetings he flew into a towering rage claiming, Kevin told the court, that they were "acting as a cabal against the company's interest, which he considered monstrous."

The world was only to find

never occurred to me that [my father] would have committed suicide... I wasn't thinking on those lines and never did," Kevin said.

"We do not accept Robert Maxwell killed himself," said Mr Jones, but how he died remains an enigma that will haunt the brothers forever. As will the regret that Kevin feels: that he was unable to save his father's group from ruin.

During the court case, he told jurors that Robert Maxwell genuinely believed the pension fund assets were his own to play with.

"Our motivation was not, to put it crudely, to sit down and conspire to defraud the pensioners," he said. "It was to save the group. It was to maintain the value of the assets and to meet the obligations."

"I suppose that is my greatest regret, that at the end we failed... No sane person would want to be at the Central Criminal Court on trial for conspiracy to defraud pensioners."

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Outcry over Bill to end family housing priority

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

The Government yesterday pressed ahead with its plans to reshape legislation covering the homeless, to bitter protests from housing groups and the promise of outright opposition from Labour.

There are signs that the Tory whips are not entirely confident of carrying the measure in a Housing Bill which has in effect been split in two after it threatened to be the biggest piece of legislation ever laid before Parliament. A second Bill covering construction and regeneration measures will be introduced into the Lords next month.

Because of the size of the Bill, David Curry, the Housing Minister, said yesterday that plans to give grants to private companies to build housing association-type homes, and the rent regulation that would go with that, have been postponed. Although the measures will be considered for the next session of Parliament, the electoral timetable makes it unlikely they will reach the statute book.

The biggest controversy,

however, will be the removal of the duty on councils to give priority for permanent homes to homeless families. Instead they will be provided with temporary housing, which could be in the private sector, for 12 months, renewable if they are still homeless for another 12 months. Any extension beyond that will have to be in the private sector. They will take their place alongside others - including childless couples - on the waiting list for permanent accommodation.

Mr Curry argued yesterday that that would retain a safety net while providing greater fairness. Permanent homes would be allocated on the basis of need, not its cause.

Shelter argued that the measure "strikes at the very heart of family life" by forcing families with children into expensive temporary private lets.

John Perry, director of policy at the Institute of Housing, said homeless families would face repeated moves, disrupting children's education, in a regime likely to produce different provision in different local authorities.

Nick Raynsford, Labour's

housing spokesman, predicted that the end result would be families - not just single people and couples - on the streets.

Some parts of the Bill won widespread support - notably new powers for local authorities to set up housing companies which will take over council stock but have access to private capital to refurbish them, and measures to make it easier for landlords to deal with anti-social tenants.

Housing benefit fraud may be costing £1bn a year, according to a study released by the Department of Social Security yesterday. That loss, around 10 per cent of the housing benefit bill, is on top of the £1.4bn in unemployment benefit and income support fraud identified by an earlier study.

From July a national register will match data across local authorities, catching people who claim in more than one local authority area. Councils are being offered a £10m challenge fund to develop anti-fraud measures. New incentives for councils to detect fraud and more work by the Audit Commission are also being introduced.

Gallery proves Fools' Gold is real thing



Metal protectors: Conservators at the Tate Gallery, London, checking a sculpture by Bill Woodrow for his exhibition, 'Fools' Gold'. The show will consist of 15 works in bronze on the theme of survival and runs from 23 January to 28 April. Photograph: Nicholas Turpin

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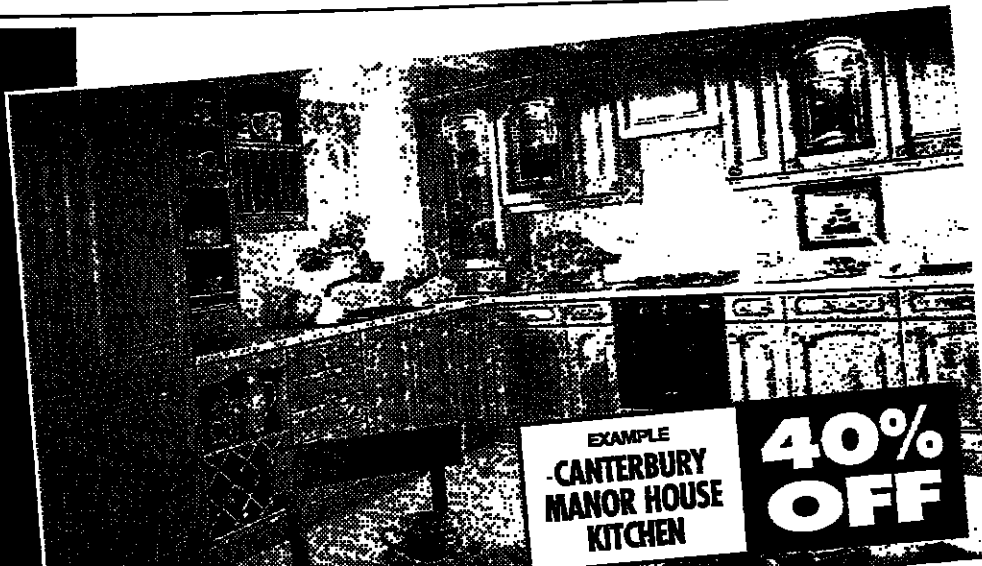
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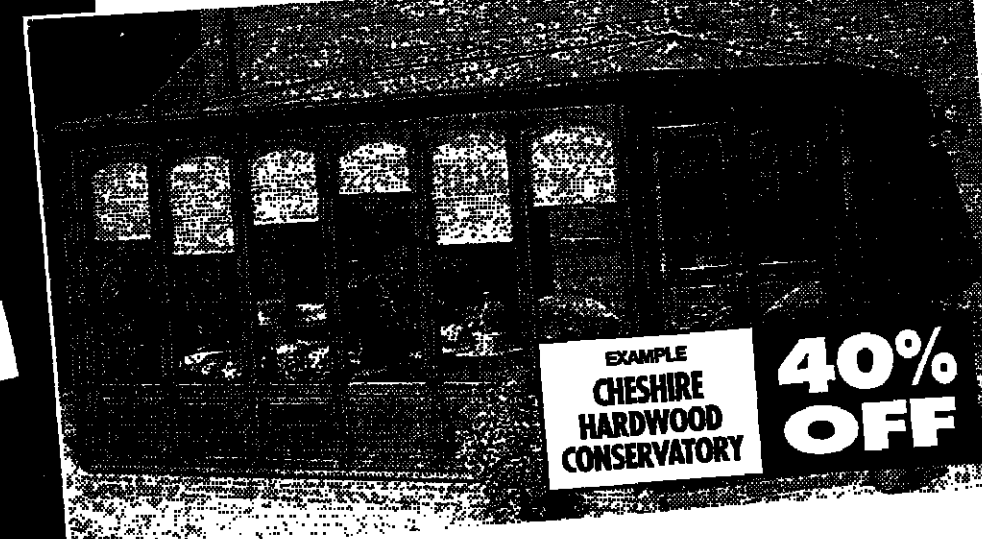
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Tories 'paving way' for deep rail cuts

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

The Government has opened the way to severe cuts in rail services by allowing "lightly used" trains to be phased out. Labour warned yesterday.

Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport, was forced to reissue his instructions to the franchising director, Roger Salmon, last week following the partly successful challenge to the franchising process by the Save Our Railways campaign.

But Labour claims the new instructions, instead of preserving services, will enable Mr Salmon to omit trains from his contract specifications "where you judge that a train is excep-

tionally lightly used" and if it is not providing an essential service. Mr Salmon must also assure himself that the service is not "good value for money".

Already several early and late trains, and a few services such as the InterCity train linking Paddington with Carmarthen, have been omitted from the specifications drawn up for the first seven franchises, three of which have been allocated to private operators.

The Court of Appeal case focused on the extent to which Mr Salmon had to base his minimum levels of services for private operators on the existing BR timetable. The court had decided that under previous Government instructions, only very small variations were allowed.

Hugh Bayley, Labour MP for York, argues that the amended instructions break government commitments to ensure that privatisation does not lead to rail cuts. He said: "When the rail privatisation legislation was going through three years ago, ministers repeatedly promised there would be no cuts to services and that services would be based on the existing timetable. This is now shown to be a lie".

Mr Bayley said that in 1993, rail managers had drawn up a list of lines which they expected to close as "the first casualties of privatisation". These include: Ipswich to Lowestoft and Norwich to Sheringham; Truro to Falmouth; St Erith to St Ives; Por to Newquay; Exeter to Barnstaple; Hull to Scar-

borough and Whitby to Middlesbrough; Aberystwyth to Shrewsbury and Llandudno to Blaenau Ffestiniog; Carlisle to Barrow-in-Furness and Barrow-in-Furness to Settle.

However, Mr Salmon argues that in the initial franchises, the number of cuts to trains has been very small and that in fact the successful bidder for the InterCity lines out of Paddington has agreed to reinstate the direct Carmarthen service.

Keith Bill, of Save Our Railways, said that his organisation would decide next week whether or not to launch another court action. He said: "Sir George had the chance to make sure there would be no cuts and instead he has paved the way for out and out cuts."

Lonely Joans try to entice a Darby or two

Desperate moves are afoot to persuade a Welsh town's macho menfolk to embrace the local Darby and Joan club, writes Richard Smith.

The group currently boasts 25 Joans and not a single Darby — only two men have turned up at the club in Hay-on-Wye, Powys,

since it was founded in 1954. Now its organisers are to introduce darts and pool at the Monday afternoon get-togethers to try to entice men in.

"It's the Joan club at the moment," said Sandra Havard, its co-ordinator. "Certainly in the three years I've been responsi-

ble for the group I have never seen any men — and I wish I knew why."

Richard Booth, 57, who owns a bookshop in Hay, believes he has the answer to why men have shunned the club. "I think it's probably rural resistance to a suburban institution," he said.

"A lot of the old men in Hay prefer to just sit in the pub — they sip their beer and die. Many of them were highly esteemed manual workers living in a male world. They would lose their role and identity in a Darby and Joan club. I wouldn't go, so I suppose I'm typical."



Light as a feather: A model at Hong Kong Fashion Week yesterday displaying a lace and feather outfit designed by William Tang. Photograph: AP/Vincent Yu

Lloyds couple face ruin

A couple who successfully sued Lloyds Bank for offering bad mortgage advice yesterday facing financial ruin after a judge ordered them to pay the bank more than £250,000.

Judge Robert Taylor, who earlier ordered Lloyds to pay £77,529 damages to Julia Verity, 55, and Richard Spindler, 36, told the couple to pay the bank's costs plus £27,000 in debts.

The ruling at the High Court in Leeds wipes out the compensation figure and leaves the couple bankrupt if an appeal against the decision fails. But outside the court yesterday, Ms Verity and Mr Spindler said they saw their five-year battle with the bank as a moral victory.

Ms Verity said: "It looks as if we will have to leave our home and we are financially ruined. We have an enormous strange feeling of relief that it is over and we can now enjoy ourselves, even if we have to enjoy ourselves as tramps."

"We have no regrets and we have fought this for other people, not just ourselves. We were badly advised and we have proved that in court. We now only owe the bank £27,000 whereas before they were claiming £150,000. But it is the legal costs which have gone against us."

Mr Spindler said: "We were always fighting as a matter of principle and we believe we still are right. We have been strong and stood up to the bank and we do not regret doing that."

The couple started the action after they were advised to take out a mortgage on a house in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, which they bought for £150,000 and intended to sell a year on for a £10,000 profit. But the property market slumped and they were forced to sell the house for a £20,000 loss.

The court heard that the couple had refused cash offers to settle out of court and in applying for costs Gregory Mitchell, acting for Lloyds, said: "The court should not have any sympathy as they are the authors of their own misfortune and they only have themselves to blame because they should have settled."

Judge Taylor deferred execution on his ruling for an appeal to be lodged.

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Photographs: Rob Stratten

public alerted staff to a man behaving suspiciously. And on the Thursday before Christmas, ranger, Allison Lloyd, and a volunteer, Robert Jones, were tipped off that three men were climbing over the boundary wall. Night sights helped track them down but the suspects escaped.

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Chechen crisis: Gunmen surrender ferry after Ankara toughens stance, as Yeltsin praises bombardment of rebel-held village

Hijackers free Black Sea hostages

Chechen leader escapes to hills

PHIL REEVES
MOSCOW

Boris Yeltsin was adamant yesterday that the bombardment of Pervomayskoye was a "well-planned and executed" operation, despite indications that Salman Raduyev — leader of the band of hostage-taking rebels who incurred the Kremlin's wrath — escaped to the hills of Chechnya.

The Russian authorities have admitted they do not know the whereabouts of the rebel leader Raduyev, whose initial raid on the Dagestani town of Kizlyar 12 days ago precipitated a stand-off that ended after the Kremlin ordered the military to flatten nearby Pervomayskoye — where the raiders moved with their hostages.

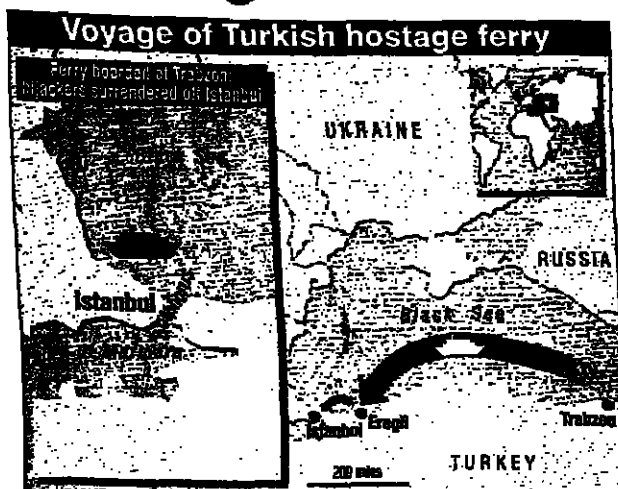
As contradictory and questionable figures for the numbers of dead and living continued to swirl around — Mr Yeltsin said that 153 rebels out of a 300-strong group were killed, while 82 hostages escaped or were freed — Russian troops moved in to clear the wrecked village.

Several Chechen separatists, including Aslan Maskhadov, chief of staff to the rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, contend that Raduyev and some of his fellow fighters blasted their way through Russian lines and escaped. There were unconfirmed reports that they may still hold some of the hostages from Pervomayskoye.

However, there was no sign that such awkward issues would derail Mr Yeltsin from his view that the assault was an outright success. "The operation was planned and carried out correctly," he said, while praising his two top security officials in charge of the operation. Mikhail Barsukov, head of the Federal Security Service (FSB), and Anatoly Kulikov, the Interior Minister, had "carried out their missions well", he said.

The President was doing his utmost to try to salvage the best from the Pervomayskoye affair by vowing to crack down on the separatists. Known "nests of Chechen terrorism" would be "destroyed" because they "were stuffed with arms and pose a great threat", he said. He praised as "apt" a remark in a Russian newspaper that "mad dogs" — the Chechen rebels — "should be shot".

Whether all this rhetoric will do him much good remains doubtful and it seems that he has yet to find the form he will need for June's presidential elections. The conservative constituency he is trying to woo will not have been impressed by the apparent failure of the Russian army to nail Raduyev.



HUGH POPE
Istanbul

Seven pro-Chechen gunmen who hijacked a Black Sea ferry surrendered just after nightfall last night. All 300 passengers on board, mostly Russian tourists and traders, apparently were safe.

Surrendering three days after seizing the ferry in the Turkish port of Trabzon, the gunmen were taken in a launch to a naval base. The hijackers had already dropped demands for an end to the Russian assault on the Chechen hostage-takers in Dagestan. They freed 13 inmates during the day, including the one person injured in the hijacking.

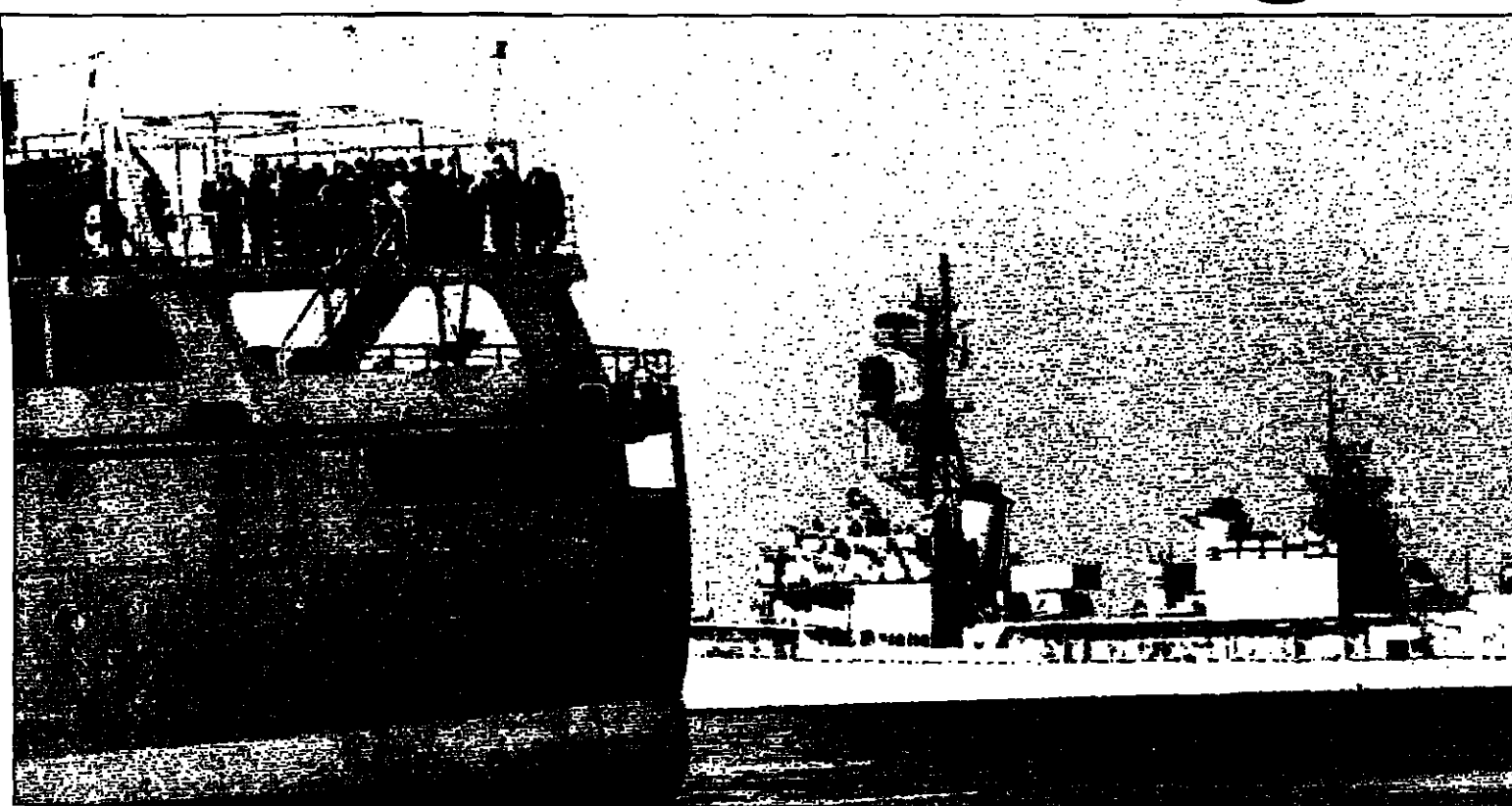
"We are like dynamite. We are ready to blow up," one hijacker had snapped over the radio, when talks took a bad turn. But the atmosphere had a sweetness at most other times.

The chief hijacker, Muhammad Tokcan, called the admiral shadowing him "my commander", while the admiral replied with comments like "don't worry, my dear."

The hijackers spent the afternoon negotiating by radio outside the entrance to the Bosphorus strait. Their white ferry circled slowly between grey Turkish frigates, coast-guard cutters and fishing boats commandeered by camera crews and groups of Turks who supported the hijackers.

While the government was demanding the hijackers surrender, the groups of supporters gathered at both sides of the mouth of the Bosphorus to dance Caucasian jigs and cheer.

At a big Islamist, anti-Russian demonstration after Friday prayers at Istanbul's Beyazit mosque, demonstrators shouted: "Chechnya will be the Russians' graveyard."



Hoping for freedom: Hostages on board the ferry *Avrasya* in the Bosphorus with a Turkish warship in close attendance

Photograph: AP

Many suspect the hijackers have an Islamist background, since as their hand-signs were the same as those of violent fundamentalists and their weapons are of the type found in raids on Islamist training camps. Mr Tokcan is wanted by the police over a bomb attack on a pair of businessmen in Trabzon who allegedly refused to pay him protection money.

Aware of the need to prove its anti-terrorist credentials, Turkey toughened its position towards the hijackers' demand to sail down the Bosphorus to a press conference. "The militants must surrender and trust in Turkish justice," the caretaker Prime Minister, Tansu Ciller, said after a meeting with military chiefs. The Chechen leader, Dzhokhar Du-

dayev, said the hijackers had made their point and that further resistance would only harm the Chechen cause.

The lasting memory of the hijacking for most Turks will be the discovery of how many people in the country can trace their roots to the Caucasus — 3 to 8 million of the country's 65 million people — and how many turned out to support the

Chechens. As President Sulayman Demirel said: "We cannot escape our history."

The hijacked ferry was called the *Avrasya*, or *Eurasia*, an irony lost on few Turkish commentators. The name symbolised the hopes in the early 1990s for a pivotal region, joining former Soviet Muslim states, Black Sea countries and the Middle East. Instead, the

seizure of the *Avrasya* showed up all the Christian-Muslim cracks, not to mention the contradictions in Turkey itself.

Ankara (AP) — Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the Welfare Party, the Islamic party that won elections last month, on Friday gave up trying to form a governing coalition. Mr Demirel asked Mrs Ciller to try to put together another coalition.

Fog of battle clouds Pervomayskoye's ugly truth

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

A dense fog of propaganda, rumours and contradictory reports surrounded the 10-day hostage drama in Dagestan, making it virtually impossible to distinguish what really happened from accounts supplied by the Russian authorities and the Chechen rebels.

However, it seemed likely yesterday that, from the Russian point of view, the confrontation had ended in a far from satisfactory manner, with

dozens of rebels eluding the forces that bombarded them for four days, escaping into Chechnya and taking some hostages with them.

In all, more than 200 people appear to have been killed since the crisis erupted on 9 January, making it one of the bloodiest episodes since President Boris Yeltsin sent troops into Chechnya in December 1994 to suppress the north Caucasian republic's attempted secession. According to Mr Yeltsin, the dead include 153 rebels, 27 Russian troops and 24 civilians

killed in the town of Kizlyar, where the Chechens seized their first group of hostages.

However, Mr Yeltsin omitted yesterday to specify whether the ferocious four-day battle at the village of Pervomayskoye, near Kizlyar, had caused the deaths of any hostages there. He said 82 hostages had been freed and 18 were missing and presumed alive, but since the Russian Interior Ministry stated last Sunday that the Chechens were holding 116 hostages at Pervomayskoye, this would indicate that 16 to 34 hostages are either

dead or still in Chechen hands. To complicate matters, the Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, said last Wednesday that only 42 hostages had been freed and none remained in the village. If this is accurate, then 56 to 74 hostages were either killed in the battle or are still Chechen prisoners.

Similar uncertainty surrounds the number of Chechen rebels who died or escaped from Pervomayskoye. The Russian Federal Security Service, successor to the KGB, and the Interior Ministry gave

several conflicting estimates of how many guerrillas were holed up in the village, ranging from 150 to 250.

If only 150 rebels were there, then Mr Yeltsin was exaggerating yesterday when he said 153 had been killed and 28 captured (he later revised this figure to 30). But if 250 rebels were in Pervomayskoye, then according to Mr Yeltsin's figures up to 70 must have escaped — unless a lot more bodies are buried under the rubble.

If, as seems possible, the leader of the hostage-taking operation, Salman Raduyev, is among those who escaped, then the Russian military operation looks even less successful. A spokesman for Chechnya's leader, Dzhokhar Dudayev, said yesterday that Mr Raduyev had crossed from Dagestan into Chechnya with some fellow fighters and hostages, including, humbly for Mr Yeltsin, several elite Interior Ministry troops (Omon) whom the rebels captured last week on the outskirts of Pervomayskoye.

Mr Raduyev sparked the

showdown on 9 January by leading a pre-dawn raid on the Pervomayskoye helicopter base at Kizlyar, from which he said Russian forces had launched attacks on rebel positions inside Chechnya. The raid turned into a hostage crisis as the rebels, whose numbers were estimated at 200 to 500, stormed Kizlyar hospital and seized up to 3,000 captives.

The rebels initially demanded the removal of all Russian forces from Chechnya as the condition for freeing the hostages, but within hours they had dropped this in favour of a guarantee of safe passage across the Dagestan border to their homeland. By the following morning, they were thought to hold about 160 hostages as they made their way in a convoy of buses and trucks towards the border.

According to Dagestan's Interior Ministry, the rebels stopped near Pervomayskoye because Russian helicopters had fired on the convoy and blown up a bridge on its agreed route. The Chechens then pro-

voked Russian wrath by seizing 37 Omon troops who had been sent from the Siberian city of Novosibirsk to operate near the Chechen-Dagestani border.

Along with more than 50 hostages from Kizlyar hospital and a number of local villagers, the Omon troops were held in the mosque and school at Pervomayskoye. According to some reports, the rebels forced the Omon men to help them strengthen their defences by digging trenches in and around the village.

The Russian authorities justified their decision to attack the village last Monday by saying the rebels had started to execute the Omon men and some Dagestani elders brought in to start negotiations. However, no freed hostage has confirmed the Russian version of events.

As with the Chechen hostage-taking episode last June in the southern Russian city of Budyonnovsk, where more than 100 people were killed, many questions remain about why so much blood had to be spilt for the crisis to end.

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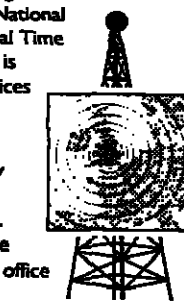
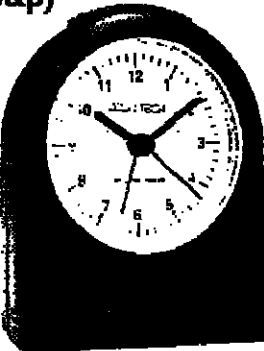
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As British troops pour into Bosnia, the peace implementation force, I-For, they face a stern reminder that the biggest danger is not bullets or mines but road accidents.

In the four weeks since I-For took over from the United Nations on 20 December, there have been 87 road accidents, resulting in 21 write-offs, including even container vehicles. About 60 per cent of the accidents had "no civilian interest whatsoever" - they were I-For fault, or involved only the force's vehicles. In that time, there have been 19 military casualties, one civilian death and one civilian left in a coma.

The British have 7,000 vehicles in their part of the theatre and are by no means the worst offenders. The Americans, new to the region, and the French

BALKAN DAYS

have also experienced the hazards of a run-down road system in an unforgiving climate that has suddenly met the largest influx of heavy armour since the Gulf war. Not only are 60,000 I-For troops pouring in, but the former UN Protection Force is pouring out.

"It's congestion up there, to say the least," said Sergeant-Major Ian Ford, briefing a new British contingent on the conditions. "You'll have a 2,000ft cliff on one side and a 700ft drop on the other. You'll hit snow, ice, white-outs. You name it, you'll hit it," he continued.

"If you only have two snow-chains, please put them both on the same axle," the officer warned. "There have been vehicles spotted in Bosnia with one snow chain on the front left and another on the back right. That's about as much use as a chocolate fireguard. OK?"

Then there was a surprising concession: Many accidents were due to tiredness. "It's often said that on an operation hours don't matter," Sergeant-Major Ford said. "They do matter. If you feel tired and about to nod off at any time, you stop and you pull over and you rest. The operation can take second place for a bit."

Of the 13,000 British troops due to form part of the Implementation Force, 9,000 have now arrived. Split is the main airport and seaport and most troops fly in here, on RAF Tri-Star flights, as if they were on a civil airline, complete with cooked meals, refreshing towels and in-flight magazines.

Everyone is processed through a "Theatre Reception Centre" located in a big, draughty hangar south of the airport. Everyone goes through the procedure: even Major-

General Mike Jackson, the British sector commander, as well as soldiers on their third six-month tour. Here in the TRC, the sergeant-major, with his didactic skill, is king.

"Form a circle round the briefing board. Welcome, gentlemen - whoops, sorry ma'am, ladies and gentlemen. Right, first you will get the road safety briefing, then the medical briefing. There is no smoking in the TRC. If you want a bag, go out of the door. Then you will move in the direction of the arrow and swipe your card through the machine. You will collect your I-For identity card. Then you can grab some tea or soup. You will collect your luggage and the sniffer dog will have a sniff - see if he can find the £10,000 in used notes. Any questions?"

The sniffer dog, a King Charles spaniel called Zack, who looked more like a pet, was part of a "deterrent policy" against drug use. All British soldiers are liable to be tested for drugs at any time. Zack frolicked around as his military police handler sat quietly in the corner.

The new, credit-card style army identity card, with a hologram and a magnetic strip, contains all the vital information about the individual.



Driving ambition: Royal Marines in Bosnia. Road accidents, not bullets, are the biggest danger Photograph: Reuters

had arrived. The yellowish I-For cards are numbered and only state name, rank, number and nationality.

"Well, have a good tour," said the sergeant-major. "I'm leaving in two days. There are two ways of leaving here. One is the

way you came - and the way I'm going: up the steps, with a big smile on your face. The other is six of your mates carrying you in a box across the tarmac. Got it?"

Christopher Bellamy

Croats and Serbs agree to swap prisoners

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Sipovo

As dusk fell last night at Black Dog, the freezing crossing point between Bosnian Serb and Muslim-Croat territory, 16 Croat prisoners held by the Serbs were expected from the north. At the same time, 220 Serbs, mostly captured by the Croats in the summer offensive, were on the way northwards from Mostar.

Red Cross and British Army personnel were optimistic that about half the number of prisoners from all three former warring factions in the British sector might be exchanged before midnight. Apart from the release of all prisoners of war, most conditions of the Dayton peace agreement that had to be completed by midnight had been fulfilled.

The Chief of Defence Staff, Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge, visiting the headquarters of the British 4th Armoured Brigade, at Sipovo, said there were "many more plusses than minuses." He added: "The big issue, of course, is the prisoners of war." The peace implementation force, I-For, does not officially recognise the idea of exchange. Prisoner release is supposed to be unconditional. But in Bosnia prisoners are a form of currency, albeit a rare one as few were taken alive. Yesterday's attempts to secure the release of about 250, half the total in the British area, were between Croats and Serbs. The Muslims have still shown no sign of moving on this most delicate of issues.

The British component of I-For remained adamant that its primary task is to secure the large area held by Bosnian Croats that is to be vacated by

3 March and handed over to the Serbs. It will not be drawn into investigating war crimes allegations. Field Marshal Inge said. "Every commander to whom I've spoken says they simply don't have the resources and the ability to do detailed investigations. That is up to the [UN] tribunal. What they mustn't do is take them away from their primary task, which is implementation of the Dayton agreement."

Another delicate issue was apparent yesterday as we drove into the area to be handed back to the Serbs. Sipovo was not wrecked by fighting but by the Croats after the Serbs fled. Smoke rose from houses in the deserted town along the road now lined by I-For direction signs. British soldiers at Sipovo said they had seen six houses afire on Thursday night.

From yesterday I-For is responsible for "securing" the area. But it is not clear what that means and there is disagreement about it within the Nato force. Some say it means military security, not law and order. But Major Chris Claridge, who commands the Royal Fusiliers, said he was the *de facto* keeper of the peace in the area.

"There are no authorities at the moment," he said. It was not his role to stop looters and arsonists, he said. But it was "an implied task". He went on: "We are trying to stop them. If we see someone looting a house, we photograph them. We tell them, 'If we see that house burning, we'll come after you.' Such evidence will also be of use to new civil authorities when they are established."

"It's not an I-For responsibility," he added, "but until the local authorities are set up I-For will do what it can."

a question of sport

How many of the following sports still suffer from a lack of investment - rugby league, football, cricket, golf, basketball?



(for the answer, turn over the page)

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international

Palestine votes on road to statehood

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

Palestinians from Gaza, the West Bank and Jerusalem go to the polls today to elect the first president and legislative council in their history. For Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, it is a critical milestone on the road to a Palestinian state.

Some of the remaining obstacles were seen yesterday at a roadblock near the West Bank town of Jenin when Israeli soldiers killed three Palestinians in a car. Palestinian security services said they were members of the Islamic militant group Hamas and were shot after they opened fire, wounding an Israeli soldier.

A million Palestinians go to 1,698 polling stations, where they will receive two slips, red to vote for the president, almost certain to be Mr Arafat, and white for the 88-member legislative council. A week after the election the council will meet, probably in Gaza, where it will elect an executive.

The poll will see the burial of two options the Palestinians have always feared: absorption, possibly followed by expulsion, by Israel, or a return to Jordanian rule as it was before the 1967 war. A senior member of Fatah, the main Palestinian political movement, said yesterday: "This is the end of the idea of greater Israel or greater Jordan. This is the most important result of the election."

It will also serve as a referendum on the Oslo accords. The secular opposition and, with less conviction, the political wing of Hamas, have called for a boycott. Turn-out figures will therefore be a sign of the support for deals reached by the Palestinian leadership with Israel since 1993. A 75 per cent turn-out will be good for Mr Arafat; anything below 60 per cent will be bad. Figures may be affected by the rain and sleet which has hit the West Bank in the past few days turning roads into mud.

Last-minute difficulties over

voting in Jerusalem appear to have been ironed out. Israel wants to treat Palestinian voters there as if they were postal voters casting their ballots far from their homeland. The aim is not to let the election set a precedent which will damage Israel's claim to sovereignty. The 52,000 Palestinian voters in Jerusalem feared that if they voted they would lose their papers giving them the right to live, work and receive health care in the city. On Thursday Israel's Foreign Ministry finally said Jerusalem residents would not be affected by voting. Agreement has also been reached on ballot boxes in Jerusalem post offices, which are being used as polling stations. Israel wanted



Arafat: Certain to win but pressure is on to win well

the slot at the side, so they looked like post boxes and the Palestinians at the top, so they looked like regular ballot boxes. The deal is said to be that the slot should be at the corner.

Hebron, the one town from which Israeli forces have not withdrawn, may also be the scene of trouble or at least a low turn-out. Troops guarding 500 Israeli settlers during the day will keep a low profile. The settlers themselves say they will not disrupt the election though they will demonstrate in Jerusalem.

The problems of Palestinian opposition to Oslo and the elections were evident in Ramallah, north of Jerusalem,

yesterday. Supporters of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine chanted "No to elections under the shadow of the bayonets of occupation" and demanded the release of 4,000 Palestinian prisoners and an end to the 135 Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. They also demanded the return of Palestinian refugees who lost their land in Israel in 1948.

All Palestinians would agree with these demands but not about their practicality. Ali Zaki, a student from nearby Bir Zeit university, was watching sympathetically but sceptically. "Of course I am going to vote. The election will give us a chance to do something for ourselves. Now that the Israeli troops have left Ramallah I can go for a walk at night without being frightened of getting arrested," he said.

The demonstrators also wanted the release of one of their leaders, Ahmed Yassin, held two days before by Mr Arafat's Preventive Security, one of his security agencies. They said they had been told he would not be freed until after the election. Such harassment is not determining the result of the election, almost certain to be won by Mr Arafat and Fatah, but it is a bad omen for the type of state the new council will rule.

In Hebron, Khalid Amayreh, an Islamic commentator, said: "There is a reign of terror among Palestinian journalists. I know one called Mahmoud who has been reduced to writing under the name of Stephanie Parker." Others see this as an exaggeration. George Hazboun, a candidate in Bethlehem, says he doubts if it would be possible, even if Mr Arafat wanted, to set up an authoritarian state in Palestine along the lines of Syria and Iraq. "From the first years of the intifada, every Palestinian has been interested in politics. We are a much more political people than the Syrians and the Iraqis. It can't be done."



Angry voices: Marchers in Hebron calling for a boycott of today's Palestinian elections

Photograph: AP

Breakfast with the general in his labyrinth

Yasser Arafat, Nobel Peace Prize winner and electioneer; Ariel Sharon, outcast. More than a decade ago I watched the controversial Israeli Defence Minister stand, khaki-clad, on a mountainside south of Beirut while his artillery thundered across the valleys.

Now an older and bulkier General Sharon, encased in an expensive grey suit, sat across the breakfast table in a gentlemanly London hotel, complaining about his old enemy's transformation.

"I would never have signed an agreement with somebody who by any criteria is a war criminal," he declared. "Arafat has more blood on his hands than anyone I know since the Nazis." The general paused to choose his words with care. "I think this man should have been removed from society," he concluded.

Michael Sheridan breaks bread with Ariel Sharon and hears him denounce the PLO leader he tried so hard to kill

If General Sharon had had his way, Yasser Arafat would have perished in the ruins of Beirut in 1982. Architect and conductor of Israel's invasion of Lebanon, the general - then Menachem Begin's Defence Minister - laid down barracks and sent jet fighters on a lethal manhunt for his PLO quarry. Hundreds of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians perished.

Today he sits as a seething presence on the opposition benches of the Israeli parliament, while his old foe negotiates with Israeli ministers and, this weekend, awaits his confirmation as the first elected leader of the Palestinians.

How did the general feel as he pondered these ironies? The massive shoulders and jowls shook, the eyes twinkled. "The

war in Lebanon was a war of salvation - one of the most justified wars we ever took part in," he said defiantly.

But while his Likud party languished in opposition, the Labour government did a deal with Mr Arafat and the PLO, installing in General Sharon's considered view, a terrorist regime in Jericho and Gaza as a prelude to betraying Israel by handing back the Golan Heights to Syria.

The Israeli government "covers up" Mr Arafat's involvement in terrorism, he contends. "They know Arafat is mocking and laughing and joking at them; There are 41 wanted terrorists who killed and injured Israeli citizens and they are sitting in a café in Jericho having a nice coffee and nothing happens."

As if prompted by this thought, he broke off from his lecture to order a coffee.

To listen to General Sharon is to hear the litany of woes of the Israeli right, dating from the "infamous handshake" between the late Yitzhak Rabin and Mr Arafat on the White House lawn. Israel can never trust the Arabs. Even the Egyptian newspapers print material "that Der Stürmer [a Nazi newspaper] could learn from." Five generations of the Sharon family had battled "Arab terror".

Peace with Syria would be bought at too high a price. Iran is going nuclear, Iraq chemical, Turkey fundamentalist. Wherever General Sharon looks around the compass he detects a menace that he deems impossible to negotiate away.

In that, he speaks for many on the Israeli right. There is a compelling logic to his simplicities. Like Slobodan Milosevic, he possesses a brutal charm that disarms those convinced that anyone capable of ordering numerous deaths must necessarily be unpleasant in person. General Sharon is untroubled by conscience. He is first and foremost a military man whose performance in Israel's wars made him a national hero - until the Lebanese adventure, that is.

"You know, I was very much impressed by that book about your SAS commandos," he confessed, referring to *Bravo Two Zero*, the Gulf war best-seller. "The special units of your country did the most beautiful things." Given half a chance, the

general would employ Israel's own notable capability in this field to deal with Mr Arafat - "pre-emptive action and hot pursuit," as he calls it.

General Sharon concedes that the assassination of Rabin by a fanatical Israeli rightist set back the cause of the Likud but he is not ready to admit that it may cost it the election later this year. "Likud could close the gap," he said. "People don't want to demonstrate in public but their worries are the same."

Security is his mantra: "The only ones who are asked to pay for peace are the Jews ... Can you tell me one country that gave up security measures for peace? I can tell you - the last time was at Munich in 1938." Ariel Sharon, invader of Lebanon, insists he is no hater



Sharon: Now an outcast, while Arafat is feted

of Arabs. He spends much of his time on a farm in Israel's Negev desert, not far from Mr Arafat's squalid demesne in Gaza. "I grew up there among Arabs. As a child I never thought of Arabs as enemies. On our farm Jews and Arabs worked together and were sitting around the table together," he recalled. "We would just like to live in peace - not rest in peace."

IN BRIEF

Nigerian protes group strikes again

Lagos — Explosions rocked Kano airport and a hotel in Kaduna, in northern Nigeria, killing one man, a day after an unknown group, the United Front for Nigeria's Liberation, emerged. The group claimed responsibility for Wednesday's plane crash in Kano which killed the eldest son of its military ruler, General Sani Abacha, and 13 others, saying it signalled the intensification of a campaign to get rid of the Abacha government. *Jeweler*

Two released

Peking — The brother of Dr Zhang Shuyun, the main source of evidence of starvation at a Shanghai orphanage, was freed after being detained this week. Meanwhile, a leading dissident, Liu Xiaobo, was sent back to his parents in north-east China after more than seven months in police custody without formal charges. *AP*

Demob happy

Paris — President Jacques Chirac plans to scrap conscription, a pillar of France's defence policy since the 1789 Revolution, but will maintain civilian service, according to Pierre Messmer, a former prime minister. *Reuters*

Hutus on the move

Dar es Salaam — Andrei Sokris, head of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Tanzania, said he feared a "massive emergency" as thousands of Rwandans and Burundians fleeing violence in Burundi massed near the border with Tanzania. At least 15,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees have crossed into Tanzania from Burundi since Thursday. *Reuters*

Plea for lama

Peking — Amnesty International expressed concern that Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, six, named by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, Tibetan Buddhism's second-ranking monk, remains missing for eight months, along with his family. Amnesty said a Tibetan abbot and 50 other monks and lay people were in detention in connection with the disputed succession. *Reuters*

No accord on mines

Geneva — A week-long conference on land mines ended without agreement because of differences on controls over the weapons, which maim or kill more than 2,000 people a month. A final attempt to reach agreement will be made in April. *AP*

Rape by fantasy

Nashville — "The Fantasy Man", Raymond Mitchell, 45, faces up to 30 years in jail after being convicted of rape by fraud. Two women told how he duped his victims into undressing and agreeing to blindfolded sex because each thought he was her lover. Police believe Mitchell has fooled hundreds of women over the years. Of the 30 women who reported "Fantasy Man", eight said they had intercourse with him. *AP*

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There are more than 100 Minotel hotels participating in this offer and they are located throughout England, Wales and Scotland. In Wednesday's *Independent* we printed a list of all the hotels available.

The hotels offer top-class comfort and pride themselves on providing a personal service that many larger establishments cannot match. To qualify for your 2 For 1 break, you must collect FOUR differently numbered tokens. Today we print your final token, Token 7.

Simply attach your four differently numbered tokens to the voucher on this page, then follow the booking procedure listed. Also printed today is the confirmation booking form. You only need to fill this in if you are not paying by credit card.

Today we have pictured the Chequers Hotel in Purborough, West Sussex. A country hotel with luxury bedrooms, Chequers boasts an elegant candlelit restaurant serving a 4-course menu that changes daily. A double room for one night costs £75.



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2. The voucher may be redeemed at any participating Minotel hotel featured in the *Independent's* directory (printed on Wednesday 17 January) for one free night's bed and breakfast for two people in a spacious twin or double bedded room with a second night's bed and breakfast is pre-purchased as the last indicated. All prices shown are per room per night.
3. Some hotels, at the proprietor's discretion, will accept the voucher for longer stays on the same 2 For 1 basis, so you can stay for 4 nights for the price of 2 for example. Please check with your chosen hotel when making your booking.
4. The voucher does not cover payment for any extra meals or services that may be requested by the holder and cannot be used with any other offer, saving or discount that may be available at the hotel.
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- Photocopies of tokens and the voucher are not acceptable.

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For queries call Minotels on 01253 292020 or Charterhouse Promotions on 0116 2477740.

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Date of arrival
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Mimi rages at 'cowards' who cheated her of power

ANDREW GUMBEL
Athens

The pandemonium in Greece is on, and one woman is feeling the chill wind of change more keenly than anyone.

She has never been much loved for Dimitra (Mimi) Liani, the air hostess turned First Lady who stole away the most powerful man in Greece and tried to steal a part of his political aura.

It recently the news has been so unrelentingly black for her that she must be hoping someone out there has an ounce of sympathy.

Her husband lies chronically in hospital and has now been superseded as prime minister by Costas Simitis, his bitter critic within the governing party.

She has not been feeling too well herself, after coming down with hepatitis-B.

Andreas Papandreu's resignation this week means Ms Liani has lost her job as head of the prime minister's private office, and with it her entire influence over the political class and public life. She has no chance of being invited to run, as she had hoped, as an honorary Pasok candidate at the next parliamentary elections.

She believes the rest of the Papandreu family, including the American ex-wife Margaret, is plotting to freeze her out of their plans for the future.

If Ms Liani is unlucky, she may lose her sumptuous villa in a posh Athens suburb. If the Greek political class lives up to its reputation for vengeance, she may even be pursued on corruption charges.

And if all that were not enough, the intimate details of her body are known to every household in Greece thanks to some of the country's sleaziest tabloids.

But Ms Liani is not to be daunted. This week she has been fighting back, proclaiming in magazine interviews that she is a survivor and has no intention of being silenced by anyone.

"Those who fight me are so small and cowardly. What are they going to do? Burn me at the stake? Let them," she thundered from her room at the Onassis Clinic, where she has

stayed with Mr Papandreu since he was rushed into intensive care in mid-November.

"They are such cowards, to be sucking up to us and then to be swearing at us."

These days, Ms Liani is all bile and twisted anger at those who have betrayed her. She accuses her step-daughter, Sophia Papandreu, of stealing her intimate photo album and distributing it to the tabloid press. She accuses senior members of the Socialist Pasok party of mounting a criminal conspiracy to trick Mr Papandreu into resigning. And she accuses the whole country of failing to understand her deep love for her husband by mistaking it for naked ambition.

"I am keeping my cool for as long as I can. I may at some point spit on everything and, by God, leave," she said, virtually spitting her words on to print. "But I won't accept to sell my hide for anyone's sake."

So what will she do now? "I can be a charlatry. I can scrub stairs," she suggests. "I can live on a lot and I can live on very little. I can sleep on a beach with a rock for a pillow." This is not convincing talk for a woman so obviously attracted to the trappings of wealth and power.

"I keep a file with everything that has been published about me and I will some day write a book if only to show the insanity of these times," she added. Political sources say Ms Liani is also jealously guarding some — but not all — of her husband's private papers as an insurance policy against any conspiracies that might possibly be hatched against her.

She knows that time is running out, since the Greek nation's patience with her is likely to last only as long as her husband stays alive.

But perhaps she will not be treated so roughly after all. Once she is no longer a threat, people might simply forget her.

This week, even George Kouris, the tabloid editor who initiated the recent naked photograph campaign, betrayed a shred of human feeling.

"They will blame her for everything, but not everything is her fault," he said. Coming from him, it could augur a national absolution.



Feeling the cold: Dimitra Liani, air-hostess turned First Lady of Greece, must be hoping that someone out there has a little bit of sympathy for her Photograph: Reuter

German angst persists as fire suspects go free

IMRE KARACS
Bonn

Flowers appeared yesterday around the blackened hulk of Lübeck's immigrant hostel where 10 people, eight of them from a single family, perished in Thursday morning's inferno. Mourners and the city's residents, their consciences troubled by the suspicious circumstances of the blaze, streamed to 3 Ravenstrasse all day.

"We cannot understand it," read a sign attached to the fence behind the building. After two days of sifting through the rubble, the police could not understand it either. The three young men from eastern Germany, detained for questioning in the vicinity of the blaze as the flames leapt towards the attic, were released yesterday for lack of evidence, along with a fourth arrested on Thursday evening.

The forensic scientists, working in a metal cage in case the structure collapsed, have been able to establish only that the fire broke out on the first floor.

Evidence that the flames spread from different directions would indicate arson, but so far no such clues have emerged.

Unlike in previous attacks on foreigners, no racist material or graffiti were left at the scene. "We are not talking of arson at the moment," said Winfried Tabarelli, the head of the local criminal police.

To those who lost close relatives in the fire, the absence of malice offers little consolation. Jean-Marie Magodila, a Zairean immigrant, returned home from a visit to another town on Thursday morning only to discover that his wife, four children and three other members of his family had been killed in the blaze.

Others are still looking for their loved ones. Four people are missing, while another five are in critical condition in hospital. At least 80 people were staying at the four-storey building, 35 more than registered.

If arson is ruled out, the focus is likely to shift to the cramped conditions in refugee hostels.

Asylum-seekers are often herded together in houses Germans would not tolerate, their numbers swollen by unregistered friends and relatives trying to eke out an existence away from the watchful German authorities. Ricketty stoves wedged between mattresses are a constant hazard.

Until the experts find a technical fault to explain the fire, Germans will continue to torment themselves with angst about racist thugs in their midst. Yesterday provided another poignant reminder of the ever-present crimes of the past, with President Roman Herzog addressing Parliament ahead of the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

"The witnesses are dying; fewer and fewer victims can personally communicate what they suffered," Mr Herzog said. "So we must, again and again, create a living future out of our memories. The most important thing is to sharpen young people's perception of how to recognise the beginnings of racism and totalitarianism."

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Maurice Lindsay

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obituaries / gazette

Charles Madge

Charles Madge was a gently charming man, with an air of diffidence and melancholy. He seemed all too easy to overshadow.

His mentors were I.A. Richards, T.S. Eliot and J.M. Keynes, yet his name is rarely connected with any of these men. His first wife, the poet Kathleen Raine, and his brilliant friend the film-maker Humphrey Jennings have sustained fame eclipsing that once enjoyed by Madge's own verse. The foundation of Mass-Observation as a social survey in 1937 was more his work than anyone else's, and his co-authorship of early publications gave it reputation and credibility, but Tom Harrison took over the organisation, and most of the credit. When Birmingham University made Madge its first Professor of Sociology in 1950 this was a brave appointment. The subject itself was still deeply unfashionable in British academic circles, and Madge, furthermore, had no degree in any discipline. These things too have been forgotten.

Madge was at fault in reluctance to beat his own drum. A biography - which someone must write - would cast light on the highways of 20th-century life, as well as in many interesting corners.

He was born in 1912 in South Africa, where his father was one of the arch-imperialist Milner's "young men" rebuilding the country after the Boer War. But Li-Col Madge was killed in the First World War, and Charles was brought to Britain. A scholarship to Winchester promised orthodox success, but Charles early displayed an attraction to deviance. Interested both in science and poetry, he was drawn to I.A. Richards (whose methods in pioneering "practical criticism" of literature ac-

tually prefigured certain aspects of Mass-Observation). As Scholar of Magdalene College, Cambridge, he became Richards's pupil.

The early Thirties were famously a great period for Cambridge science, with the massive Rutherford and charismatic Bernal. The ambience affected others beside Madge. J.B. Bronowski was one brilliant contemporary who wrote verse and practised science. Cambridge, accordingly, was more open than Oxford to the influence of continental Surrealism. This wasn't merely a movement of melting watches and snook-cocking stunts. Surrealism claimed to be "scientific" in the sense that it extended knowledge of the subconscious. Madge's Cambridge friend Jennings was deeply attracted, as was Madge himself. Meanwhile, the beautiful and strong-willed Raine swept Madge off his feet and down to London before he had completed a degree.

Madge professed Communism, yet the "reactionary" T.S.

Eliot, all-powerful over poetic reputations as commander of Faber's list, liked his verse and took him up. One of Eliot's friends was a leader writer for the *Daily Mirror*, and when Madge needed a job Eliot referred him to that paper. As a reporter Madge was fascinated by the discrepancy between what people actually thought and what politicians claimed they did. The Abdication crisis of 1936 crystallised interest in the issue.

Raine and Madge were living in Blackheath, south-east London, near the famous GPO Film Unit where Jennings, and other friends, worked. On 2 January 1937, Madge announced in a letter to the *New Statesman* that a group had been formed to study public opinion. He called for "mass observations" to create "mass science". This attracted the attention of Harrison, a self-taught anthropologist recently returned from the New Hebrides who was setting up a survey of the culture of south Lancashire. Within a month, the two ventures fused as "Mass-Observation".

While Harrison led fieldwork in Bolton, Madge organised from Blackheath a "panel" of volunteers ready to send in material about their daily circumstances and to reply to regularly "directive" questionnaires - on their attitudes to class and race, for instance. While Harrison's survey methods generated a kind of "documentary in depth", panel replies, and the later related "War Diaries", created a rich and random mass of material in which hundreds of people, mostly obscure, mostly unknown to each other, made their confidential confessional. Ironically, most among the hordes of researchers latterly at-

tracted to the Tom Harrison Mass-Observation Archive at the University of Sussex have probably found the "Madgeian" material more intriguing than the Harrisonian "reports".

The two men collaborated on *Britain by Mass-Observation*, a Penguin Special of 1939, then on *War Begins at Home* (1940). But differences of emphasis became painful. Madge drifted out of the organisation. Under the aegis of Keynes he studied, with statistical rigour, wartime patterns of working-class saving and spending for the National Institute of Economic and Social Research. Then, in 1943, he joined the research staff of PEP (non-government "Political and Economic Planning"). The emphasis on post-war planning continued when he moved on to direct the Pilot Press and edit a series of "Pilot Papers" under the rubric "Target for Tomorrow". In 1947 he was appointed Social Development Officer for the New Town of Stevenage - "my task", as he wrote, "being to act as a sociologist-executive on an equal footing with the other chief officers of the Development Corporation." But the town's growth was disappointingly slow and Madge left in 1950 for the Chair in Birmingham, which he occupied for the next 20 years.

He fell into the role of dignified social scientist, going on missions for the UN and its agencies to "developing" Asia and Africa. His published work, which was rather scanty, included both theoretical study (*Society in the Mind*, 1964) and empirical research (*Art Students Observed*, 1973, and *Inner City Poverty in Paris and London*, 1981).

But his main contribution to the development of social science in Britain had surely been



Confidential confessions: Madge, right, with Tom Harrison, c1937

Photograph: Howard Coor

the invention of Mass-Observation, at a time when Gallup had barely arrived, market research techniques were unsophisticated and the study of popular culture, later developed at Birmingham in the 1960s by Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall, was hardly heard of. Madge had been regarded as a leader of the younger generation of poets in the 1930s. Faber published *The Disappearing Castle* (1937) and *The Father Found* (1941). The space of verse became a mere stream in the 1940s, and had petered out altogether by the mid-Fifties. When Arvon Press in 1994 gathered together the two books with unpublished work, as *Of*

Love, Time and Places, the latest poem included was dated 1971. His style changed little over time. Originally athletic and experimental, later rather sedate, it was always marked by distance from the "real world". In his tendency to abstraction it suggests the work of Edwin Muir, another poet published by Eliot. (It might be remarked that both Madge and Muir seem to have influenced the discourse of *Four Quartets*.) Surrealism is a presence, notably in "Flight of the Margarine" (1938). But the language always shows the early influence of W.H. Auden, so inescapable for so many. At his most "concrete", Madge is endear-

ingly awkward in a "Mass-Observation" poem from 1939 - "Drinking in Bolton".

Not from imagination am I drinking
This landscape (Lancs), this plate of
But, like the Nag's Head brand, I am drawing
(Towards imagination) gills of
mild...

However, the body of his verse has strengths which may yet find fresh admirers.

Madge's second marriage, to Inez Pearn, a novelist, ended with her death in 1976. Two children with her had followed two with Raine. His third wife, Evelyn Brown, died in 1984. When I last saw him some years ago, he was talking hap-

pily of a new relationship, ad of new poems... But what became of these? I think he was heavily critical of his own work. Taken too far, diffidence disables talent. Yet Madge certainly made his mark, or mark.

Angus Calda

Charles Henry Madge, poet and sociologist, born Johannesburg 11 October 1912; co-founder Mass-Observation 1937; Professor of Sociology, Birmingham University 1950-70; married 1938 Kathleen Raine (marriage dissolved; one son, one daughter); 1942 Inez Pearn (died 1976; one son, one daughter); 1979 Evelyn Brown (died 1984); died London 17 January 1986.

Lord Glendevon



Glendevon: born into the purple

Photograph: Camera Press

To his undoubted private charm - it would not have occurred to so proud and patrician a Tory to whisper a word of complaint to a journalist - Lord John Hope, as he then was, was peremptorily dismissed by Harold Macmillan in the Night of the Long Knives in July 1962. Perhaps he was one of those ministers whom the Leader of the Opposition, Harold Wilson, had in mind, along with Selwyn Lloyd, David Eccles, Charles Hill and David Maxwell Fyfe. Viscount Kilmauir, when he memorably chuckled on television: "Mr Macmillan has sacked half his Cabinet - the wrong half."

No Minister of Works or minister responsible for the heritage before or since has had greater personal erudition about great buildings. It is hardly surprising, since his childhood home was the greatest of all the creations of William and Robert Adam, and much of his early manhood was spent in the marvellous grandeur of Victoria's House in New Delhi designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens. (Nicholas Ridley told me no one knew more about the work of his own Lutyens grandfather than Glendevon. Indeed, as Minister of Works he was to take a particular interest in the repair, care and maintenance of British embassies and Commonwealth buildings round the globe.)

It was an irony (later con-

firmed to me by Selwyn Lloyd) that what immediately broke Macmillan's nerve was a Tory lost deposit in the West Lothian by-election of June 1962, a drop in the Conservative vote from 39.7 to 11.4 per cent since 1959 - and that in West Lothian, on the banks of the Forth, stands Hopetoun, most imposing of all the great Adam houses, where Glendevon was brought up.

Indeed, when he was ennobled in 1964, Hope took the title of Baron Glendevon - Glendevon being the farm on the Hopetoun Estate near Winchburgh, West Lothian, where he had roamed as a child (and subsequently made famous by the late Brian Caddow for pioneering work in sheep farming).

Geoffrey Rippon, who succeeded Hope in 1962 as cabinet minister in charge of the Office of Works, says that no sacked minister could have been more charming or as generous to his successor. "He was there to welcome me to the ministry when I went up the steps for the first time at the age of 38. He was exceptionally nice. However hurt he was he did not show it."

In those days the Office of Works (unwisely abolished by Wilson) was responsible for buildings in Scotland as well as England - and many of our great institutions, such as the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh.

Those who are in a position to know recall with clarity all the help they received from central government after Hope became Minister.

John Hope was born into the highest purple of the British establishment. His grandfather was Governor-General of Canada. In the 16th century the Hope family had metamorphosed themselves from successful pawnbrokers in the High Street of Edinburgh to distinguished bankers to the Scottish kings and acquired lands to the west of Edinburgh where they built Midhope Castle and then Hopetoun itself.

His father, the second Marquess of Linlithgow, was chairman of the Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture in 1926-28 and then of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform. He became Viceroy of India in 1936. Bitterly attacked for allegedly clumsy dealings with Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and the Congress Party, Linlithgow had come and press and is out of favour with historians. John Hope passionately believed his father to be misunderstood and much maligned and in 1971 published a book, *Viceroy At Bay*, which, based on the extensive archives in Hopetoun, is required reading for a serious student of the twilight of the Raj.

His mother, Doreen, Marchioness of Linlithgow, was the

daughter of Sir Frederick Milner Bt, who served as MP for York and then for Bassetlaw and was of the family of the Earl of Cromer, proconsul in Cairo. Proconsular genes could hardly have been more concentrated in Hope, who certainly was of a generation and background devoted to the public service. His life there enhanced by marriage to Elizabeth, daughter of the writer Somerset

Maugham with whom Hope had a turbulent, but always affectionate and intensely interesting relationship.

He was a younger, and much cleverer twin. His brother, Charlie, the easy-going third Marquess of Linlithgow, with whom John got on surprisingly cheerfully, would say half in jest and wholly in earnest, "Fair shares! I inherited Hopetoun with its problems and what re-

mained of the money - John got an unfairly huge share of the family brains and energy!"

So it was - though to be fair Charlie spent five years in a debilitating German prisoner-of-war camp.

After Exon, where he was proud to be chosen as a Fellow (or member of the governing body) from 1956 to 1967 and about which he took more than an ornamental interest, John Hope went to Christ Church, Oxford, where he read Greats and excelled as a middle-distance and mile runner. He had what Conservative MPs of the early 1960s would call "a good war". Fortunate to be one of the Scots Guards who somehow got out of Norway after the fiasco at Narvik in 1940, Hope was one of the first to land at Salerno and Anzio, being mentioned twice in dispatches.

In the 1945 election he came home in uniform and in the Labour landslide won North Midlothian and Peebles. In 1958-59 I was the Labour candidate for Peebles and was repeatedly told not only by knickerwear firms such as Ballantyne's but by many householders that John Hope had been a most kind and caring MP. He had gone to enormous lengths to immerse himself in the problems of the woollen industry and also the paper industry which was so important in those days to Midlothian.

John Hope was one of a limited number of Conservative MPs in the 1945-50 Parliament who kept the Opposition being an opposition. Lord Boyd-Carpenter, the then MP for Kingston-upon-Thames, says: "He was one of a small band who might after night challenge the Labour government. He was very effective, particularly on economic subjects."

On boundary reorganisation Hope inherited the prosperous Edinburgh seat of Pentlands. Last year, when Douglas Hurd resigned as Foreign Secretary and Malcolm Rifkind succeeded, Glendevon said that he was delighted that an MP for Pentlands had become Foreign Secretary - the position he himself had craved all those years ago. As Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs from October 1954 to November 1956 and in the Commonwealth Office from 1956 to 1957 he took a special interest in relations with India and Pakistan, believing it important that British ministers should make it clear at every opportunity that the unilateral cord had been broken, but that Britain's cultural and affectionate relationship with the former Indian Empire should go from strength to strength.

After a well-remembered period at the Scottish Office Hope became Minister in charge of the Office of Public Buildings

and Works in Macmillan's Cabinet until he was so suddenly ejected.

Not sparing a moment to sulk, he threw himself into his own interests, becoming Chairman of the Royal Commonwealth Society and then an active member of the Historic Buildings Council for England under the chairmanship of his erstwhile Permanent Secretary Sir Edward Muir. Muir has stated in public and private that Hope was one of the most decisive, effective and knowledgeable ministers that a department could wish to have in charge.

Tam Dalyell

John Adrian Hope, politician and businessman; born 7 April 1912; MP (Conservative) for North Midlothian and Peebles 1945-50; for Pentlands 1950-64; Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1954-56; Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Commonwealth Relations 1956-57; Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Scotland 1957-59; Minister of Works 1959-62; PC 1959; Chairman, Royal Commonwealth Society 1963-66; created 1964 Baron Glendevon; chairman Ciba-Geigy 1967-71; deputy chairman 1971-78; Chairman, Historic Buildings Council for England 1973-75; married 1948 Elizabeth Maugham (two sons); died 17 January 1986.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

TAYLOR: On 17 January 1986, to Rachel (nee Hope) and David, a son, Benjamin Anthony Castell, a brother for Felix. With thanks to all at Queen Charlotte's Hospital.

DEATHS

GILES: Phyllis Margaret, formerly of Park Parade, Cambridge, passed peacefully to rest in a Norfolk nursing home on Monday 15 January 1986. Beloved aunt of Forestry and Giles. Funeral service in the Church of St Edward King and Martyr, Cambridge, on Wednesday 24 January at 3pm to be followed by cremation. Flowers to Westman Funeral Service, 26 Abbey Walk, Cambridge.

MADGE: Charles, poet and social scientist. Died at home in East Finchley, on 17 January 1986, aged 53. Much-loved father of Anna, James, Vicky and William. Funeral at St Marylebone Crematorium, London N2, on Monday 29 January at 10am. Enquiries to Abbott & English Funeral Directors, telephone 0181 364 0000.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 2011 or fax to 0171-293 2010. Charges are £2.50 a line (VAT extra).

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal, Patron, served Rugby Union, today supports the Ireland's Scotland International Rugby Match at Lansdowne Road, Dublin, Ireland.

Changing of the Guard
1704th The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, which mounts the Queen's Guard at Horse Guards, will, between January 20 and 21, be replaced by the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.00am. The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment will then be replaced by the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, from 1.00pm.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr M. J. Loneragan and Miss L. D. M. Owen
The engagement is announced between Matthew, son of Mr and Mrs Edmund Loneragan of South Dennis, Massachusetts, and Louisa, daughter of the late Mrs Pucko Owen and of Mr John Owen, and to Mrs Rosemary Owen, of Mayfield, East Sussex.

Mr J. C. Roughton and Miss A. G. Matthews
The engagement is announced between Adele, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Sel Matthews, of Auckland, New Zealand, and Julian, younger son of Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Roughton, of Chiswick, London.

Birthdays

TODAY: Dr Edwin (Burr) Aldrin, astronaut, 60; Mr Tom Baker, actor, 60; Mr George Burns, comedian and actor, 100; Sir John Chadwick, High Court judge, 55; The Very Rev David Edwards, Provost Emeritus of Southwark Cathedral, 67; Lord Ewing of Kirkford, former MP, 65; Sir Henry Fisher, former President, Wollaton College, Oxford, 78; Miss Lisa Goddard, actress, 46; Lord Hargreaves, industrialist, 74; Major Dick Fern, racehorse trainer, 57; Commandant Vonka McBride, former Director, WRNS, 75; Mr Christopher Martin-Jenkins, radio sports commentator, 51; Miss Patricia Neal, actress, 70; Mr Nathan Shcharansky, Soviet dissident, 48; Mr Eric Stewart, rock guitarist, 51; Mr Curtis Strange, golfer, 41; Professor Nalin Chandra Wickramasinghe, astronomer, 57; Mr Nigel Williams, novelist, 48; Mr John Withrow, Editor, the *Sunday Times*, 44.

TOMORROW: Dr Alan Borg, Director, Victoria and Albert Museum,

54; Dr John Burnett, former Principal, Edinburgh University, 79; Dr Robin Butler, historian, 79; Dr David Carey, joint Registrar, Faculty Office, Archbishop of Canterbury, 79; Lord Cagney, company chairman, 86; The Rev John Coventry, former Master, St Edmund's House, Cambridge, 81; Mr John Denison, former general manager, Royal Festival Hall, 83; Mr Paolo Domingo, opera singer, 55; Mr George Forster, MP, 54; Dr John Haynes, former Director, National Portrait Gallery, 67; Mr Kenneth Maginnis, MP, 58; Sir George Humphrey Middleton, former diplomat, 86; Mr Jack Nicklaus, golfer, 56; Sir Nicholas Phillips, High Court judge, 58; Miss Seena Reid, Director, Scottish Arts Council, 46; Mr Paul Scofield, actor, 74; Mr Martin Shaw, actor, 51; Mr Aubrey Singer, former Deputy Director-General, BBC, 69; Rear-Admiral Sir Richard Townbridge, 76; Mr Laurence Whistler, glass-engraver and writer, 84; Mr Norman Willis, former General Secretary of the TUC, 63.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: André-Marie Ampère, physicist, 1775; Joe Friedrick Victoria (Gessner) Adamson, companion of wild animals and author, 1910; Federico Fellini, film director, 1920. Deaths: John Howard, prison reformer, 1790; Sir John Soane, architect, 1837; Jean-François Millet, painter, 1875; John Ruskin, social reformer, art critic and writer, 1900; Audrey Hepburn (Edda van Heemstra Hepburn-Ruston), actress, 1933; Sir Matt Busby, football manager, 1934. On this day: The first Fleet sent to Botany Bay arrived in New South Wales, 1788; Hong Kong was ceded to Britain by China, 1841; John Fitzgerald Kennedy was inaugurated as the 35th US president, 1961. Today is the Feast Day of St Euthymius the Great, St Fabian, pope, St Fechin and St Sebastian.

TOMORROW: Births: Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson, Confederate general, 1824; Dr Duncan James Corrow Grant, pointer, 1853; Christian Dior, couturier, 1905; Benji Hill (Alfred Hawthorn Hill), comedian, 1924. Deaths: Lenin (Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov), Russian leader, 1924; Lytton Giles Strachey, biographer and critic, 1932; George Orwell (Eric Arthur Blair), novelist, 1950; Cecil Blount de Mille, film director, 1959. On this day: The *Daily News*, the newspaper edited by Charles Dickens, was first issued, 1846; taxi-cabs were first officially recognised in Britain, 1907; *Tommy* row is the Feast Day of St Agnes, St Alban or Bartholomew Roe, St Epiphanius of Pavia, St Frodo Baggins of Bree, St Meinrad and St Patroclus of Troyes.

Lectures

TODAY
National Gallery: Tom Parvons. "Looking Backwards (J): Raphael, Saint Catherine of Alexandria", 12pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Andrew Bolton. "Fashion in China 1910-70", 2.30pm.

TODAY

National Portrait Gallery: Laurence Bradbury. "Paintings from the Chalcidry Bequest", 2.30pm.

Dinners

Defence and Security Forum
The East of Lothian is the host at the Annual Dinner of the Defence and Security Forum held yesterday evening in the Peart Dining Room, House of Lords, London SW1. Lady Olga Maitland MP presided. General Sir Charles Gulline, Chief of the MOD Staff, was the guest speaker. Mr Anthony Mudd also spoke.

Just a nice, straight, honest path please

faith & reason

On the last page of *Little Women*, Louisa M. Alcott wrote on her readers, coaxing them towards buying the sequel. (Nowadays it would be given a more marketable title, like *Little Women II* or *Big Women*). Laurie turns to Jo and asks: "Don't you wish you could take a look forward and see where we shall all be then?"

"I think not," answers Jo, "for I might see something sad."

But I want to: and so, I reckon, do most of us. To want to see into the future is thought of as cranky or, if not that, then greedy: wanting more than we have a right to. You get shovelled into the same bracket as all the sad people who consult Russell Grant and Mystic Meg or it's assumed that you want to fiddle the National Lottery or your insurance.

But really, it's only that I get so tired of living in a world of guesswork. If we could just live in the present, as we are constantly enjoined to do, that would be fine. There is only one of them. But there are always three, four or five futures we have to cope with. Every action has to be thought out and duplicated in case X happens, or Y happens, and to guard against the eventuality of Z happening.

This making of provision (an ironically inappropriate word, given that that's precisely what we don't have) gums up all of life. It means I have to (or ought to) leave early when I go out in the evening in case I get held up in the traffic. It means the local health authority has to guess how many ambulances it needs to cover my area in case I smash into another car at the same time as somebody falling downstairs. (At the moment everybody round here

Who wants to see into the future? Paul Handley does. The Editor of the *Church Times* explains the difference between 'waiting in the Lord' and 'running towards the goal'.

drives carefully, since there is only one ambulance.) It means that somebody falls downstairs, because the health authority cancelled their home-help in order to spend the money on a second ambulance, which it might never need.

Generally my desires are modest. I want to know when the car will need to be replaced. I'm not afraid of the big one, though. Unlike Jo, I don't worry about the sadness, since to know when one will die is to be able to prepare for it. My children used to play up in church because they weren't able to judge how near the end of the service they were. Knowing how long you have to go on suffering something helps you to endure it.

There are two spiritual ways of coping with uncertainty about the future. One is referred to as "waiting in the Lord". (Not to be confused with "waiting on the Lord", which, translated, means simply "I'm flummoxed".) The other, more common in Evangelical circles, is talked of as running towards the goal. The new Bish-

op of Chelmsford, announced this week, is a runner, but a marathon-runner rather than a sprinter; in other words, an Evangelical "enriched by other traditions". The Lord-waiters cope by letting events wash over them: for them, faith has been confused with hope. By contrast, the goal-runners set a target, and believe themselves to be heading towards it, disregarding life's awkwardnesses: for them, faith has been confused with determination.

For the rest of us, when faced with all the eventualities we ought to cover, we rely on faith, routine and the television schedules. We know that on Thursday evening next week we will have eaten sweetcorn-and-pepper-topped pizza, and that Matthew will be telling us about his central heating. We know that the car will start tomorrow morning. We know that the sun will rise. In other words, we pretend. And we gamble: the lure of the National Lottery is that it is so easily predicted compared to the number and complexity of the risks we take each day. We walk on a tissue-strewn carpet of supposition and getting across it depends on not looking down.

It is a wearisome business, and I'd like it to stop. Just a nice, straight, honest path for me, please: seeing the next joy coming towards me, seeing the next sorrow. It doesn't seem that much to ask. I wouldn't necessarily want complete presence about everything; and I'm even willing to agree not to change too much as a result of my new knowledge, if people think that's cheating.

Until this is granted, I'll have to practise: I'll carry a watch to church, believe the weather forecast and skip to the last pages of novels. Not one of Jo's boys, I'm afraid.

John 1:1-12

The Independent Weekend

Portrait of the artiste as an artist

Giles Smith on
David Byrne
and the
School of Rock
page 7

INSIDE STORIES

3 Pedro Almodóvar has jumped to global notoriety with a series of sexy, brash comedy dramas that have shown the same gleeful enmity to good taste as, say, the plays of Joe Orton

6 A man takes a single spoonful of a substance and puts it in his mouth. Instantly he is transported to another world, a place full of surreal visions and primary colours. His eyes bulge; his senses cannot cope. What is this terrifying compound?

13 Looking at 140 riverbank sites, a team of zoologists from Oxford University found that the number occupied by voles had fallen from 73 per cent in 1990 to 24 per cent in 1995. Given this staggering rate of decline, the research team now estimate that water voles in the Thames could be extinct by 2015

Photograph: Gavin Smith / Camera Press

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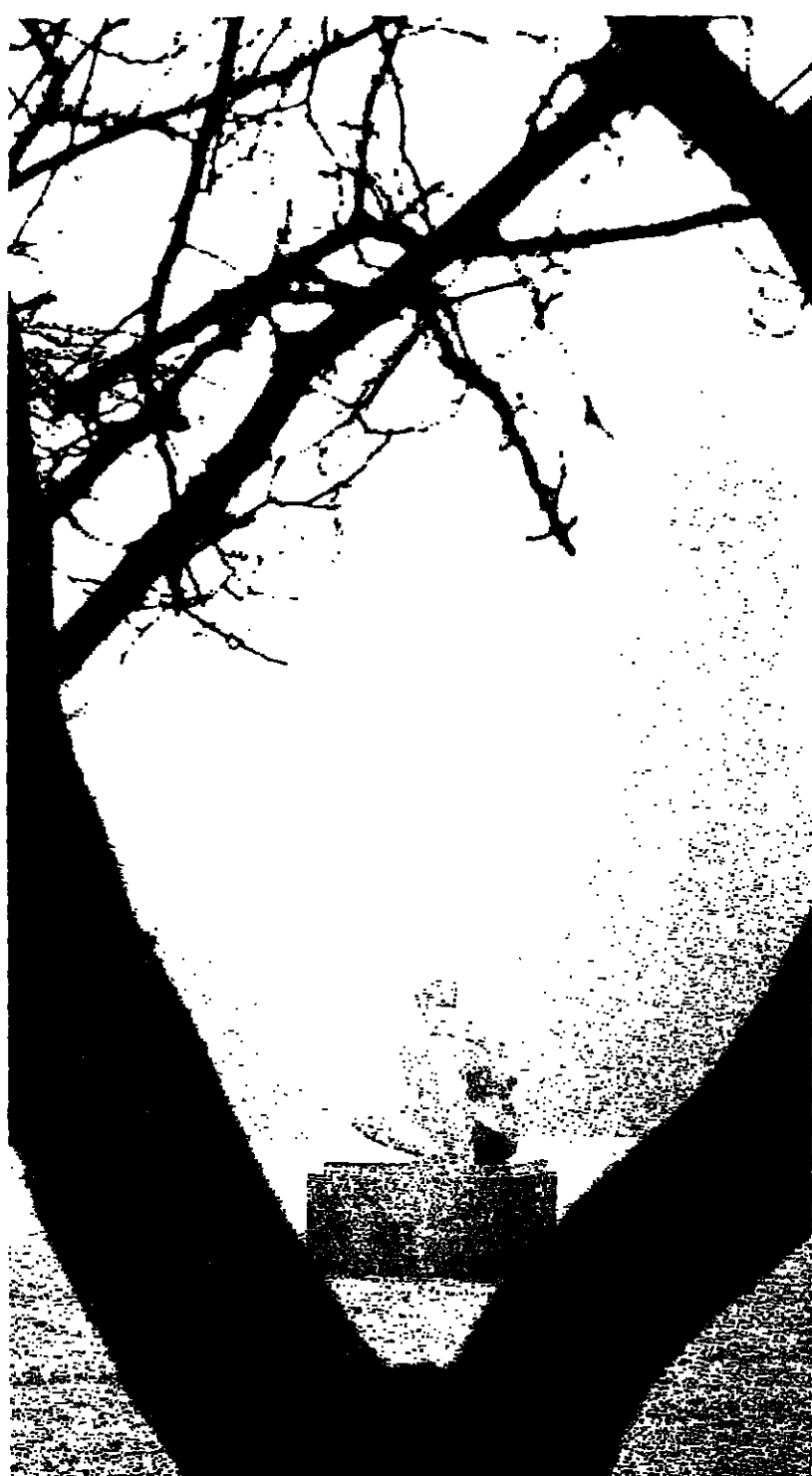
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2
picture story



Clockwise from top: 'Large Reclining Figure' 1938, recast in 1983; 'Sheep Piece' 1971-72; 'The Arch' 1963-65; 'Reclining Mother and Child' 1975-76

Words by Jonathan Glancey
Pictures by Brian Harris



BRONZE AND BRASS

The photographs on this page show some of the most beautiful works of Henry Moore, our most famous sculptor, in the garden and fields overlooking his home in Perry Green, Hertfordshire. They are looked after today by the Henry Moore Foundation (set up by artist, wife and daughter in 1977). Last year, the Foundation turned over £3.2m in death, as in life, Henry Moore is big business. This week, for the second time in two years, his daughter, Mary Danowski, has gone to court claiming some £200m worth of her late father's work. She failed in 1993, and was faced with six-figure legal costs. Danowski says that the "artist's copies" of her father's works produced from 1977 to his death in 1986 are rightly hers. But, the Henry Moore Foundation insists the artist was an employee of HMF Enterprises (the trading arm of the Foundation) in those years. In return for a salary of £45,000, Moore turned over all new artworks to the Foundation. This spared him potential tax liabilities. The arrangement seemed fixed until Danowski began her legal battle. The Court of Appeal has yet to make a judgment.

If only the case of Mary Danowski versus the Henry Moore Foundation was a simple storm in an artist's teacup. In fact, the legal row between the sculptor's daughter and the Henry Moore Foundation has far-reaching implications for the art world. These are complex but lucrative questions of who owns what and how when an artist dies.

The case can only encourage those who love art, but are wary of the art world, to believe that those concerned with the nation's artistic legacy can be just as interested in brass (and in getting one over each other) as in bronzes.

In all this squabbling, the sculptures at Perry Green have been clouded in vituperation. Yet, come here under stormy January clouds: between ancient hedgerows of hawthorn, dogwood, blackthorn and dogrose and grazing sheep, your eye will meet superb sculpture, a world removed from courtrooms.

While the art world squabbles, and lawyers charge their fees, the rest of us should not let our judgement of Henry Moore and his sublime sculpture be clouded.

The Henry Moore Foundation, Dane Tree House, Perry Green, Much Hadham, Herts (01279 843333). By appointment only, booking now. Tues, Weds, Thurs 2.30pm. 1 April to 30 Sept, £2

THIS WEEKEND WHY NOT...

EDITED BY DAVID BENEDICT

READ The Whitbread Nominees



Zip through the final line-up for the Whitbread Book of the Year, the nation's most *haut-tan* prize after the Booker, and see if you can guess the winner. You'll have read *The Moor's Last Sign* by now, of course (the Nobel prizewinner), and you may have spent Christmas grappling with Lord Jenkins's sparkling life of the bald eagle of Victorian liberalism, Gladstone (Biography prize), but you won't have come across – and will probably enjoy – the mid-life luxuriations of Bernard O'Donoghue in *Gunpowder* (Poetry prize), and you're in for a real treat with Kate Atkinson's *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* (First Novel prize). Of Michael Morpurgo, (Children's Book prize) I cannot speak, but the children's category never wins anyway. The big prize is announced on Tuesday. "If the Gladstone book doesn't get it, I shall, Dickensianly, eat my head, sir," says John Walsh, our literary editor.

DISCOVER Charles Ives



TS Eliot worked in a bank, Philip Larkin was a librarian and Charles Ives was an insurance clerk. He was also the most extraordinarily diverse composer America ever produced. He died in 1954 and packed a lot in to 80 years. His work ranges from the folksy to the experimental to the visionary and this weekend is the perfect time to get to know him with the Barbican festival of his work. Activities begin at 12.30pm with a lunchtime concert and at 2pm there's a documentary on the man himself. There are five further concerts climaxing with Andrew Davies conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra on Sunday night in a programme including the lush, romantic Second Symphony and the overwhelming power of his Fourth. The weekend's jewel, however, is the recital by Thomas Hampson (above) and Dawn Upshaw, America's leading interpreters of song, on Sunday afternoon. The Barbican, London EC2 0171-638 8891

GO TO A market



A gentle poke around the nooks and crannies of a local market is what Saturdays and Sundays were invented for. Whether it's the flea market in Bristol, a surprisingly good place to pick up second-hand furniture at prices Londoners would kill for, or foraging through the piles of books amongst the arts and crafts of Greenwich's Sunday market, there are few better ways of whiling away the hours without blowing your life savings. Columbia Road market in London's East End is horticultural heaven. The Sunday-only stalls sell a profusion of flowers and plants, while the shops offer everything from bugs and browls to waterfalls and garden furniture. Get there early (it's over by 2pm), stock up for your garden/window box and then head round the corner to Brick Lane for bric-a-brac followed by fresh bagels stuffed with smoked salmon and cream cheese.

CATCH The last two days of Art 96



The success story of the week has been Art 96 and there are still two days in which to discover what all the hot galleries are showing and selling. If you're daunted by the prospect of strolling around town, worry not: everything is under one roof. In the first day and a half, over 12,000 people flooded through the doors to gaze, admire, argue about and buy Charles Saatchi's swagman in and strapped up everything by young black artist Chris Goff, one of the winners of the new Wingate Award, sponsored by this newspaper. Geoff Wilder of the Portal Gallery announced, "There is a feeling of optimism for the first time in five years. People are buying paintings again." Indeed. Someone bought a Beryl Cook for £12,000 but you don't need to be in that league to pick up something you fancy.

11-6 Sat, 11-5 Sun, at the Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, London N1 0171-359 3535 £7/4.50 cover

SPORT The new rugby merchandise



Rugby is waking up. Clubs, managers and referees have all taken up the power of merchandise and there are now a myriad of ways to increase your team's income and have something tangible to remind you of it. The new Manchester United have had a highly sophisticated merchandise operation for years. Why not strap on your local rugby team's sweatshirt, or a shirt or accessories? With the rugby season well under way, Harlequins FC have launched the Harlequins First Collection, a vast catalogue of items embroidered with the Quins' logo, many of which are produced from baseball caps to baby booties (each embroidered with a baby's name). Every Quins fan has his or her own, but even the casual club has something to offer.

Harlequins FC items available by mail, 0181-892 0822

JAN 30 1996

Ooh, Pedro, you are awful

Pedro Almodóvar makes sexy, naughty arthouse films that make people laugh. Which is just one reason why he'll never cut it in Hollywood.

By Kevin Jackson, Photograph by Glynn Griffiths

I don't know that Pedro Almodóvar was the supposed star director of Spain's new cinema, but he is probably the most internationally celebrated man of La Mancha since Cervantes's Don Quixote. He took up his lance against the winds of change, you might guess that he was in some other business, dressed, not in the expected many dazzling colours (his films are full of bright sharp dresses), but a rumpled grey pullover, looking thoughtfully at his scrub of black hair. Almodóvar looks more like an earnest actor in stage theatre, or maybe a comedian with droopily lugubrious but highly mobile features and a theatrical style of delivery.

Indeed, though he apologises needlessly for his poor English, his delivery can be as rapid-fire as a Ben Elton monologue and, despite the occasional quick conference with his translator and a few gaffes, he is remarkably fluent. Should Hollywood ever call him, as it has already eagerly called his handsome young discovery Antonio Banderas, Almodóvar should have no problems with the lingo. Hollywood, on the other hand, may well have its problems with Almodóvar in these nervous late Nineties.

Ever since his zero-budget debut film in 1980, *Pepi, Luci, Bom y otras chicas del montón*, Almodóvar – the posters and credits tend not to bother with his Christian name – has jumped from local success to global notoriety with a series of fizzy, sexy, brash comedy-dramas and dramatic comedies that have shown the same kind of gleeful enmity to quiet good taste as, say, the plays of Joe Orton, though Almodóvar's work usually has a kinder heart than Orton's dark farces. (While some of Almodóvar's comedy hints that its creator might be cannily aggressive, the reality is quite different: for all his nervous energy in conversation, he's also polite and affable, even chummy.)

Pepi, Luci, Bom, for example, featured an erection competition; *Kika*, his last film, includes a rape scene that goes on so long that its victim becomes bored and starts to worry about the shopping. No wonder, as Almodóvar notes, that many of the "intellectual" American audiences that picked him up so eagerly around 1984 have turned against him, suspicious of his undogmatic sexual politics (*Tie Me Up Tie Me Down*, in which the bound victim ends up romantically involved with her captor, was found particularly dodgy) and disconcerted at the spectacle of an openly gay director who abstained from direct homosexual activism. "Homosexuals protesting against *Basic Instinct*," he observes in a new book of interviews, *Almodóvar on Almodóvar*, "seems as absurd as hoteliers campaigning against *Psycho* because the murder takes place in a motel." But viewers willing to relax their scruples and play by the rules of Almodóvar's world have discovered that rare thing: an artist at once wacky and heartfelt, a harsh realist in love with all the cinema's glorious trickery: a maker of "art" cinema, if you like, that is actually a lot of fun to watch. (It's no surprise to learn that one of Almodóvar's favourite movies is the Audrey Hepburn musical *Fanny Face*, a romantic comedy about the fashion trade and existentialism; Almodóvar says that it's "a film I consider my encyclopaedia".) Shortly before she resigned her throne at the *New Yorker*, the critic Pauline Kael bestowed her definitive blessing on him: "The most original pop writer-director of the Eighties, he's Godard with a human face – a happy face."

But the film Almodóvar is in town to promote, *The Flower of My Secret*, while no less human than its 10 precursors, is notably less happy: its face is conspicuously tear-stained. True, Almodóvar's trademark black wit hasn't deserted him completely. *Flower* opens with a characteristic bit of double-take poor taste, in which two pitifully embarrassed young doctors try to persuade a bereaved mother to donate her 16-year-old son's organs to medicine – a scene that proves to be simply a hospital's training seminar, with an actress playing the part of the distraught mother for the benefit of students. As Almodóvar notes, this sequence is the first of the film's many acts of imitation and imposture.

"In fact, at the beginning of the film, we are present at an imitation of a situation that is a very serious situation, but at the same time it's real, because you know that this medical seminar is a real thing – I read about it in the newspapers. The most crazy things in my movies I read in the newspapers, they are real ... [laughs] I develop them in a logical way, but they are always taken from reality."

But in other respects, *Flower of My Secret* is a marked departure from form, as Almodóvar readily concedes. "It's much more sober, yes. It's in a different genre from the others and I tried to make it like that. I don't know if it marks a new direction for me, but I do know that my movies from now on will be changing. I'm afraid of repeating myself, so I think that I'm going to do four or five movies that will be very different, different from each other and from the others, from the past."

It would take many paragraphs to provide an adequate synopsis of the many sub-plots that entwine *The Flower of My Secret*, but its main plot is simple enough. It's about a painful passage in the life of Leo (played with wonderful delicacy by Marisa Paredes), a 40-ish woman who enjoys great commercial success with the romantic novelettes she writes, but is wretched in her own love-life. For all its light comic touches, the film is really a tale of hopeless love. It aches with loss and, as its director says, it is by far the most personal of all his films:

"All my movies are autobiographical, but not in a way so direct as this. I felt very close to the main character because she is a person who uses words a lot. Above all, the way I identify with her most is to do with her roots, her family. This is something that's very moving for me – in some ways it's like a portrait of my family. And the movie talks about someone who is abandoned by a lover, and this is very close to me – loneliness is one of the main themes of the movie."

The autobiographical vein in *Flower* runs deep. We learn that its heroine learned about literature as a child from reading and writing letters for illiterate neighbours, just as the young Almodóvar did; we find that she comes from the same region of La Mancha in which he spent his first eight years and so on. You can see why autobiography is so tempting for Almodóvar: even in bare outline, his life story

offers the material for any number of movies – it's reminiscent of the classic plot of the 19th-century novel in which the impoverished but abundantly talented boy from the sticks comes to town and grows into the hero he always knew he could be.

In Almodóvar's case, admittedly, the success took a while to realise: he spent a decade or more working for the telephone company in Madrid, devoting his evenings and weekends to carving out a colourful, if ragged, artistic career in a variety of media: comic strips, pop music, articles (such as his genially lurid confessions of a fictitious porn star) and Super-8 films. There has always been a lot more than transposed, fragmented or caricatured autobiography in his films.

Take, for example, the character of Angel in his latest – a character uncomfortably close to home for me. I remark, because this overweight, lovelorn loser works for the arts pages of *El País*, the Spanish sister paper of the *Independent*: Angel, *c'est moi*. ("You wish," sneers the translator. "No, no," says the kinder director, "you would make a good Angel ...") Angel, Almodóvar reveals, is indeed based on a real-life *El País* journalist "older, and much more handsome than in the film, but I couldn't find an actor who looked like that", but his presence in the film is also to do with a kind of commentary Almodóvar wanted to make, not only on Mills & Boon-style fiction, but on the kinds of literary intellectuals who are fascinated by such bodice-bursting stuff.

"In Spain, many serious authors, like Vargas Llosa [the Peruvian novelist and politician] and Guillermo Cabrera Infante [the exiled Cuban writer] are very interested in these kinds of storyteller, whose profession is just to tell stories, invent stories every day, like in the last century, like in, I don't know, Dumas. The biggest one in Spain is this bitter old lady who releases every month three novels, she makes millions, and both Vargas Llosa and Infante wrote deep studies of her."

The issue of what is good and bad in popular culture is urgent to Almodóvar, partly because of his distrust for slumming intellectuals (he's insistent that when his heroine turns to writing more serious works, it's not because she wants to become an intellectual but because she wants to find more honest or adequate ways of expressing her emotional pain), partly because of the importance popular culture – or what he calls "sub-product" – has in his life and films: "I love sub-product – this kind of thing you can buy at a kiosk. But there are different levels of the quality of culture. Culture is just culture, bad if the artist is bad, good if the artist is good, and it doesn't matter what the material is."

At this point in the interview, Almodóvar turns towards the photographer, Glynn Griffiths, and strikes some comic poses. I observe that the last time Glynn and I had worked together was to meet the veteran Italian director Antonioni, who has been silenced by a stroke and had to be "interviewed" by way of his wife. The contrast is striking: Antonioni so silent, Almodóvar so expansive ...

The observation sparks two lengthy digressions from the director, one about muteness ("I once wrote a short story about how I became mute, and everyone on the set did everything they wanted, and the results were much better, so I went into a crisis thinking that I should really stay silent"), the other about a superstition or theory that he has about the uncannily predictive capacity of the cinema.

"It doesn't mean that if you do a film about murderers you're going to become a serial killer, but small details that you didn't experience before, you experience after. I bought a pair of boots that were too tight after finishing *The Flower of My Secret* [in which the heroine suffers from her cramped footwear], I destroyed telephones after making *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* – it's supposed to be before because you wrote it, but no no no, I destroyed telephones after ... why are we talking about this?"

Antonioni. "Ah yes. In the case of Antonioni, someone who always used to make all his films about incommunication ... it's a little scary to me, that he was condemned to something, it's like a radical expression of his life, to be silent at the end ..."

Since we are approaching the end of our interview, I ask Almodóvar about the rumour that he is planning to make his next film in London, with British actors; an adaptation of *Live Flesh*, a thriller by Ruth Rendell. "Yeah, but I moved the story to Spain and I changed the story a lot. I was afraid to be misunderstood. That this is my opinion of British people, because in the story awful things happen and the characters do many awful things, they are hypocrites ... I didn't want people to think this is about British society, no no. I'm telling a story, so I preferred to move it all to Spain. The novel is about a policeman who is shot and becomes paraplegic and condemned to a wheelchair ... but I changed a lot of this, so that in two or three years this man becomes a big star of [wheelchair] basketball. He's much more successful when he's an invalid, he gets more in life than when he was a simple policeman with two beautiful alive legs, and a wonderful cock, too." This new film will have a Spanish title meaning "flesh for cannon" – a phrase not quite comparable with our own "cannon fodder", denoting, he explains, something more like "doomed from birth". "The word 'flesh', *carné*, is also important because – hitting the word with relish – "there is a lot of sex in the movie ...". A note that should reassure long-term Almodóvar fans who might be worried that the mellowness shown in *The Flower of My Secret* heralds an irreversible movement into sobriety and quiet understatement.

Finally, then, are there other elements in his films that anglophone audiences are likely to miss?

"Well, there are always things with languages that are impossible to translate, like the way the mother talks in *Flower*, in a La Mancha dialect which is incredibly funny in Spain. People scream with laughter. But no. I think that the spirit is understood, you know – we understand Japanese movies, we understand Chinese movies. But you know, for a director, comprehension is not enough, ever. You always wanted to say more."

The Flower of My Secret opens on 26 Jan. Almodóvar on *Flower* (Faber, £15.99)

IZE
BRASS

What goes around comes around

There's a real art to selecting the right frame for a picture (and an entire exhibition dedicated to it). By John Windsor

This is the year of the picture frame. This autumn, the National Portrait Gallery will attempt to make respectable what has hitherto been seen as an eccentricity of rich collectors – hanging empty frames on the wall.

Most frames in its exhibition, *The Art of the Picture Frame*, will be filled up with canvas, paint, and similar stuff, demonstrating the power of different frames to alter the appearance of identical paintings. But a few will frame patches of blank wall, as if to prove the sanity of empty-frame fanatics and specialists such as Bonhams' Virginia Brix, who told me: "Sometimes you find a frame so beautiful that you cannot imagine putting a picture in it".

Why have we lacked frame-awareness until now? Partly because virtually all reproductions of paintings, whether in art books, exhibition and sale catalogues or on postcards and posters sold by museums, show them without frame. We think frames do not matter.

In most cases, we are probably right. Few pictures have survived in their original frames. Napoleon ordered an orgy of frame-shucking when he had the Louvre's collection re-framed in classical style to match the architecture. Owners of stately piles in Britain and Europe followed suit. Such vandalism was called "domestication".

The practice does raise interesting aesthetic issues. Should the frame be allowed to reduce the picture to the interior decoration? No, we all chorus. Then is it simply a picture-holder to stop the canvas from fraying, or an embellishment, complementing the picture? The answer is not difficult to find. Lays may stop the mouth from fraying, but there is such a thing as lipstick.

Those gilded and richly ornamented Louis XIII-XV frames



Virginia Brix of Bonhams: 'Sometimes you find a frame so beautiful you cannot imagine putting picture in it'

Photograph: Jane Baker

junked by Napoleon were snapped up for a few francs by struggling Impressionists, giving rise to the most persistent solecism in framing – that is how Impressionists should look. Most Impressionists would have liked to use plain off-white frames, but could not afford them.

When Van Gogh died, few of his paintings were framed, leaving endless scope for insensitive mismatches. Van Gogh experimented with gold and white frames, but painted the broad, flat frame of his *Still Life With Fruit* (1887) yellow with greenish hatching, echoing the colour and texture of the fruit.

It was the sheer exasperation of trying to frame Van Goghs that led the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam to launch last

year's exhibition of framed pictures *In Perfect Harmony*. It revealed 1850-1920 as a period when artists devoted themselves to frame design with a fervour not seen since the years before the mid-16th century, when painters and master-carvers worked together.

Seurat adorned his frames with pointillist dots, believing frames to be an extension of the painting. The pre-Raphaelites re-discovered medieval tabernacle frames. Picasso and Whistler were propagandists for creative framing. Picasso parodied stuffy, traditional framing by gluing a paper reproduction of a fussy gilded frame around his *Pipe and Sheet Music* (1914). Since then, British artist Howard Hodgkin has exploded the role of

the frame by painting over canvas and frame simultaneously.

Today, thanks to their playfulness, it's have-a-go time for artists and collectors alike. In matching frames with pictures, there is none so daring as Britain's leading frame dealer and maker – Paul Mitchell, of New Bond Street. You might think that because he re-frames purchases by the biggest American and British museums – including Holbein's *Lady With A Pet Squirrel and Starling*, bought for £10m by the National Gallery in 1993 – he is a stickler for correctness, matching paintings to frames of the precise period. However he sometimes ignores date, preferring to match by colour, ornament and scale, so that Matisse's *White Plumes*,

painted in 1919, now glares from a brassy but stylish 17th-century reverse profile cassetta frame. It looks absolutely right. Dutch Masters, on the other hand, get put back in their original ebony.

A 10-minute tour of Mr Mitchell's showroom will ensure you never again look at a picture without noticing the frame. He is publishing as a separate volume his 120,000 words on the history of picture framing that are about to appear in the Macmillan Dictionary of Art. It is the first major work on frames.

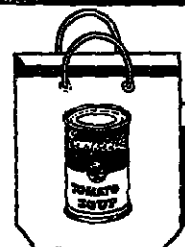
Inspired? Then off to auction, where you can buy frames for a half or a third of shop prices and where some period frames are particularly cheap. At Bonhams Chelsea, whose monthly sales shift 10,000 frames a year in the

£100-£2,000 range, £100 will still buy a 17th-century carved frame. They are simply very plentiful. A really good one might cost £200-£300. Nineteenth-century composition frames are generally cheaper. Expect to pay between £100 and £600.

If you want a modern frame made, ignore big high street framers and smart instant framing boutiques – unless you know what you want. Instead, establish a rapport with a jobbing framer, preferably one with definite tastes. Nigel Sutcliffe in Stoke Newington, north London, hates gold, preferring to stain raw ash oak and ramin (an Indonesian wood). If he thinks your choice of frame is out of proportion, colour-clashing, or otherwise awful, he will tell you.

If you are uncertain about matching picture with frame, buy a video from Moyra Byford, who runs courses in picture framing and art restoration. I watched her video *Presenting Your Paintings*, which begins by showing how to choose the right colour of mat (cardboard aperture) for watercolours. The mat colour brings out the same colour in the painting: I was amazed to see how a pale peach-coloured mat brought out the sunshine in a painting of a stone arch. Different-coloured mats made a copse of trees in a painting recede or push to the foreground like Burnham Wood.

The Art of the Picture Frame is at the National Portrait Gallery from 3 Nov-9 Feb 1997. Bonhams Chelsea next sale, Thursday 11 Jan (0171-393 3988). Nigel Sutcliffe: 0171-254 0066. Moyra Byford: Ely Cottage, Denham, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP29 5EQ (01284-810387); free catalogue.



bazaar

Bestsellers: Baxters soups

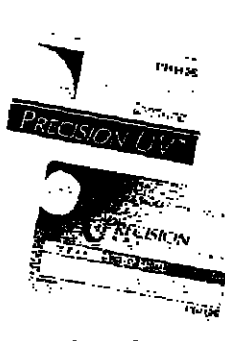
Baxters has been making soup, jams and canning beetroot since 1868, and is, as we know from seeing Ena Baxter on the TV ads, still family run. Amazingly, Baxters Visitor Centre on Speyside is one of Scotland's top tourist attractions, with 200,000 visitors a year

- | | |
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Good thing

Sliders' Precision contact lenses, £12-£20 a month

For someone who once went skiing for two days without sunglasses and had pink eyes for the next two weeks, these disposable prescription contacts, which filter out 90 per cent of the UV rays from snow glare seem ideal. They can be used with or without sunglasses and come with a credit-card sized UV Sensor Card, which has a sensitive strip which changes colour as the UV builds up; useful for monitoring danger to eyes and skin. The card can be used again. From most good opticians. For information on your nearest stockist, call Pilkington Barnes Hind on 01489 785 366



Mad thing

Bogtrotters, from £21.89

Finns have worn these for trotting over the tundra since 1989, and now they are available for plodding over a more British style bog. They come with "self-cleaning rubber studs" and have a "defined heel counter for safe descent in wet or muddy conditions". Good value at almost half the price of standard green wellies, although admittedly you only get half the boot. They are available from the BCB Outdoor Travel Products catalogue (01222 464463), who supply gadgets for the couch explorer such as a jungle survival pack and a Mayday signalling mirror



Last-minute sales bargains

Some people believe that if you don't visit the sales in the first day or two then it's not worth going. This is not the case. Inevitable bargain hunters wait till the bitter end and buy only when the price-slashing begins in earnest. Many sales are ending over the next week or so and it's those vital last days that will see sellers getting busy with their Magic Markers. We list examples of late bargains.

Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (0171-730 1234) This sale of sales is still going strong. It finishes next Saturday (27 January) but it is well worth making a bee-line to your favourite departments on Wednesday, for this is when final price-slashing takes place. Current reductions range from 25-40 per cent and further reductions will vary from department to department. For example, in the International Designer Room all of Ralph Lauren's autumn designer collection will

be priced at either £199 or £99 (a black check jacket is down from £985 to £199).

The Conran Shop, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3 (0171-589 7401) The sale ends tomorrow but if you're after a Fifties-style "Byrrh" occasional table this is the place to come. They have been reduced from £265, to £130, and now to £100.

Debenhams, 334-348 Oxford Street, London W1 (information on 0171-408 3333) A blue cross event starts tomorrow which means a further 20 per cent will be deducted from sale items which have a blue cross sticker attached to them.

Habitat, branches nationwide (01645 334433) End of sale promotion from 25 to 28 January. There's an extra 10 per cent off most sale marked prices, for example a Garrick sofa down from £949 to £759, and then to £685.

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AUCTIONS

Which get painted
more often? Dogs or
cats? A trip to
Bonhams on
Wednesday night
might give
you a clue

Unlike blockbusting New York, the London sale-rooms offer mostly minor auctions in January. But this week should lure some Americans. There are sales of dog and cat pictures: the archive of Samuel Cody (the American who was the first to make a powered flight in the UK) and Oriental ceramics and artworks, a favourite of Americans and Europeans alike.

As usual, dogs outnumber cats at Bonhams. Wednesday (2pm). If cats learned to hunt foxes in packs they might get painted more often. American small breed enthusiasts will be out in force: Scotties are a favourite. It was Queen Victoria's mother, the Duchess of Kent, who started it all when she commissioned Sir Edwin Landseer to paint Victoria's King Charles spaniel, Dash, for her 17th birthday in 1836. After that, middle-class dogs got quite blasé about posing for artists. An estimate of £100-£200 is on a painting of one of Queen Victoria's cairn terriers.

Something Victorian lingers in British dog paintings. For an estimated £400-600 you might buy the hearty, hilltop image of

what looks for all the world like Miss Joan Hunter Dunn and her dogs. With exhilarated smile, flapping mac and jodhpurs, this pre-war paragon holds three greyhounds on a leash – surely Britain's answer to that corrupting continental Louis leart and his thinly draped women with horzios.

The Japanese will be vastly outnumbered by Americans and Europeans at Christie's Oriental sale, South Kensington, Thursday (10.30am) but

they will be greatly envied for the way they feel the netlike, those tiny clothing toggles in ivory, coral and wood. Prices from £100 to £1,000 range.

The daredevil aerial exploits of "Colonel" Cody convinced the War Office that aeroplanes had no future. The 271-lot sale offers six fragments from the tree where he tethered his aeroplane prior to its historical flight: estimate £200-£300.

John Windsor

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A moment on the lips, a lifetime on the mantelpiece: cast bits of your body in bronze or plaster

By Charlotte Packer



Glyn Griffiths

When sculptor Judy Wiseman argued with her husband last autumn, she could hardly have known that it would spark off a whole new line of business. By way of an apology she plaster-cast her lips blowing a kiss, and left the result on her husband's pillow. It did the trick, and at the same time Wiseman's Valentine Kisses, an original and very personal way of declaring your feelings, was born. This month her kissing kits go on sale for the first time, and they're bound to find favour with anyone tired of chocolates, sad and weedy stalks which masquerade as red roses and all the other Valentine standards which fill the shops in February.

Wiseman's work as a sculptor is a

natural extension of her career as a psychodrama therapist. "It's a branch of therapy which focuses on turning your emotions into action," she explains. "It's about making your feelings concrete." And there can be no better means of making your feelings concrete than having your kiss cast in bronze and dispatched to the object of your affections. Simply give Wiseman a kiss and leave the rest to her, you can sit back confident in the knowledge that your partner will never have seen anything quite like the contents of the little velvet pouch which he or she will receive three weeks later.

The whole procedure (which costs £85 in total) is surprisingly easy. A small, slightly medicinal-looking kit, which fits neatly into a Jiffy bag, can

either be bought by mail order from Wiseman, or from various shop outlets. Alternatively, Wiseman explains, "we can meet people close to where they live or work. The process is so quick it can be done in a telephone box or photo booth, or on a street corner."

The kit contains all that you need to make a mould of your mouth: a small mixing bowl, a receptacle for your kiss, a bag of white seaweed-based powder, a bottle of water and instructions. First you mix the powder and water to make a minty, green gunge, much like toothpaste. Then transfer this to the kissing bowl and go for it. Judy recommends that you practise your kiss a few times while mixing, and even check it in a mirror before lunging at the seaweed paste.

The golden rule is to keep your lips together. A number of abandoned mouths in Wiseman's sitting room are from early practise runs. "I had a party and made moulds of my friends' mouths and then cast them in plaster. It was great fun, but arguments broke out over whose kiss was whose. No one could identify their own lips, and one friend made the mistake of keeping her mouth open. It looked so awful, she tried to disown it."

Visiting Wiseman's house, it becomes clear that there is no limit to her passion for casting the human body - whole or in parts - in concrete, plaster or bronze. A figure reading a newspaper emerges from her hall wall; there are feet in the corner of her study and a concrete hug (a man's

And if a kiss isn't enough...

If you feel a kiss is not sufficient to satisfy your Valentine, or would like to make a more dramatic statement, you could contact Philip Rose for a body or body-part cast.

"There is no part of the body I haven't cast," declares Philip, pre-empting my first question. "Genitalia, that's all you journalists want to know about, and the answer is yes, I've done that. I've done whole body casts as well."

First Philip coats your body with a layer of fine liquid rubber which is fast drying. For the face, the process starts with a pair of "large bore" straws being popped up the nostrils so you don't suffocate. Next, plaster of Paris is slapped on to create a rigid case to support the rubber mould. Once this has set, the mould can be removed. What reasons do people give? "There is no part of the body which is too weird for me, so generally I don't ask questions. I mean how chatty would you be if you had your pubic region covered with rubber?"

The most popular requests are for face casts to give to partners. "Mostly people do it for themselves; they may say they're doing it for their partner, but really it's for them."

"The strangest request I ever had was from a woman who wanted her nose cast for her husband, apparently it was the part of her he loved the best." Expect to pay £20-£30 for a nose or finger, while a full face mounted on a block will set you back £180. Prices increase according to the size of the cast, and the particular finish you select.

Creative Replicas can be contacted on 0171-371 0032

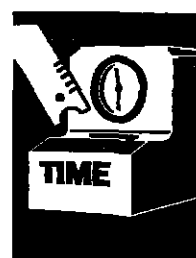
back, a woman's hands and part of her head locked in an embrace) is propped against the wall. In fact there are bronze body parts kicking about all over the place. Baby foot prints, Judy says, are particularly popular. "It's usually when they are first born, when they're so perfect and delicate and wrinkly, and it's lovely to hang on to that."

Because casting in bronze is a rather laborious process (it takes three days for the bronze just to cool down) you must allow three weeks from the first kiss to the final product. So pucker up.

For details of mail-order or shop outlets, contact Judy Wiseman on 0181-343 2453

A life in the shift of

Ursula Jones, 32, assistant, the Serpentine Gallery, London



A graduate of painting and dance from Goldsmiths College, London, Ursula has worked as a part-time gallery assistant at the Serpentine Gallery for five years. She has a two-year-old son, Samuel, and lives with her partner in Cumberwell.

Samuel normally wakes me at the same time as the alarm - 7.45am. I get up and put on my work clothes: two pairs of socks, a pair of tights, trousers, thermal vest, another vest, jumper, cardigan, hat, gloves and scarf. The gallery is freezing. Huge glass windows on three sides, a skylight and a stone floor means amazing light, but no insulation. It never gets hot, even in summer. New heaters have made a slight difference, but the biggest help is our annual Thermal Allowance - the gallery pays for two sets of thermal underwear. It opens at 10am and the assistants are due in by 9.45am. The alarm is switched off, the lights and "heating" is switched on. We then decide who is going to start where: the bookshop or invigilating the gallery. We swap every hour, or every half hour when it's really cold. The shop has the heater also has a spotlight which shines on the head of whoever's at the till. I get terrible headaches.

I don't think anyone could do this job full time. It can get very boring, depending on the show. Sometimes you are kept busy projecting films, rewinding videos or looking after exhibits - winding them up or filling them up with liquid. I used to have a studio and would paint in my days off. That's the way the job works best, one helps the other, but now I have Samuel. My lunch-hour starts at 12.30pm. I grab a quick sandwich - there is a kitchen in the back of the gallery - and get out. I walk in Kensington Gardens, go shopping in Knightsbridge, or if I have the energy I go the Victoria & Albert Museum.

Because the gallery is free we get people drifting in who wouldn't normally go to art exhibitions. I spend a lot of time defending modern art. When Tilda Swinton was lying in a box, people would ask, "What is it?" or "What is she doing?" I just said, "It's about looking."

There are some great characters who come in. Toilet Woman is quite old, very glamorous, walks dogs and comes in most days to use the toilet. Post Card Man used to be a rat catcher. He comes in to tell us about how famous he's getting for his collection of postcards. Question Man asks questions. Often they are nothing to do with the show, he just likes asking.

The gallery closes at 6pm. We cash up the till, empty out the donations box, turn off the lights and heating and put the alarm on. I get home at around 7.30pm and put Samuel to bed. When Samuel is a bit older I really hope I can do something else. It's time for a change."

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shopping

Take a look at these images from television commercials. They look harmless enough. Now look again

Does drug-related imagery used in advertising encourage drug experimentation among the young? By Alix Sharkey

A man takes a single spoonful of a substance and puts it in his mouth. Instantly, he is transported to another world, where multi-coloured objects swirl around his head, a place full of surreal visions and primary colours. He rushes headlong into this parallel universe. His eyes bulge and his head swivels through 360 degrees: the substance is so powerful that his senses cannot cope with it.

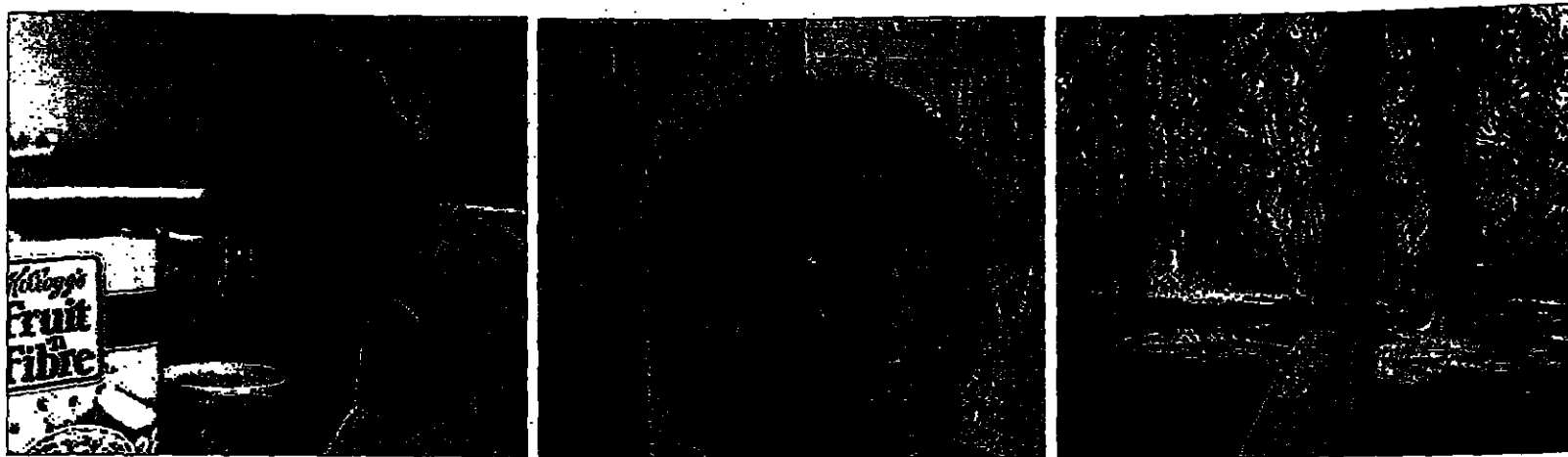
What is this terrifying compound with the power to induce such a mind-blowing trip, replete with mystic visions? The latest hallucinogenic drug from California, perhaps? In fact it is something far more pernicious, simply because it is so readily available. It is being sold right now on a street corner near you. Teenagers all over the country are getting hooked on it. The name of this substance? Kellogg's new Fruit 'n' Fibre cereal.

The Fruit 'n' Fibre ad is the latest in a line of commercials whose imagery appears to draw on the effects of mind-altering substances. Another that suggests altered states of perception is the Smirnoff ad in which people and objects viewed through a vodka bottle are distorted in a manner redolent of psychedelic hallucinations.

According to Ben Lewis - who has analysed several such commercials for *Wired World*, Channel 4's new media series - there is a growing trend for TV advertising that, consciously or otherwise, reflects states of mind more readily associated with LSD or Ecstasy, rather than vitamins A, B and C. Mr Lewis calls them "sanitised representations of euphoria".

Blatantly trippy visuals were first employed three years ago by the ad agency Howell Henry Chaldecott Lury (HHCL), whose ground-breaking Pot Noodle ad, featuring strobing psychedelic imagery and a heavy metal soundtrack, led to complaints that it triggered convulsions among epileptics. It was subsequently re-cut with a more subdued effect. "The Kellogg's Fruit 'n' Fibre," says HHCL's director Rupert Howell, "is merely continuing in this tradition."

Advertising consultant Malcolm Evans, who advises agencies on the messages that their ads - wittingly and unwittingly - are putting across, says "there is undoubtedly a noticeable increase in the number of ads that have obvious or oblique references to psychedelic states, or Ecstasy culture in its various forms." The recent upturn in the advertising industry's fortunes, he believes, has brought an influx of



The Fruit 'n' Fibre ad: a man takes a spoonful of cereal, and is transported into a world where multi-coloured objects whirl about and an apple is shot off his head



The Smirnoff ad: people and objects viewed through a vodka bottle are distorted in a manner redolent of psychedelic hallucinations

young creatives steeped in the rave culture, whose work clearly refers to this background.

Recent examples, he claims, include the Club 18-30 commercial that ironically invites you to "Put on your disco clothes and dance to the trendy beat". Evans points out that all the letter E's in the text are highlighted with dots, while in smaller type viewers are advised to check out the "real" ads in youth-oriented glossies like *Sky* magazine.

The latest commercial to catch Evans's eye is for Schizun, a new soft drink. "It features silver dolphins, an animated 3-D mandala, and floating pyramids. It's incredibly psychedelic," he says. "Even its slogan, 'Refresh Your Senses', is a reference to Aldous Huxley's quote about 'cleansing the doors of perception'."

Of course, advertising aimed at young consumers will, by definition, be louder,

faster, more aggressive and colourful than commercials for health care, pensions, frozen peas and pet food. It's simply an expression of the Zeitgeist, according to Howell. "It's not conscious," he says. "There's no way that advertisers sit down and ask how they can get drug-related images into their work. But they are trying to say that certain of these products give you a rush, either physical or emotional, which by definition has a parallel with the rush you might get from an illicit substance."

Having acknowledged the parallel, Howell argues that such advertising has a positive side, because "it's better for people to get a 'fix' out of these kinds of products". But this begs another question: is advertising simply responding to a popular need for a "fix"? Has the country become that drug literate? Howell quotes a recent survey suggesting that more than a third, and pos-

sibly up to half of all 15-year-olds have experimented with drugs. "And I'd be willing to bet a very high percentage of people in their thirties had also tried drugs by the time they were that age, too." The principal consumers of today, in other words, are unlikely to be fazed by drug references.

According to Virginia Lee of the Independent Television Commission (ITC), any "obvious" drug references are in the eye of the beholder. "Without question, any advertisement which was interpreted by viewers as an encouragement to take drugs would not be acceptable for broadcast. However, the ITC does not believe that these are images that will cause difficulties." She dismisses the *Wired World* argument that the Fruit 'n' Fibre commercial draws on drug-related imagery and might encourage drug experimentation among the young. "Frankly,

that's taking the interpretation one step too far."

Advertising is the dreaming of the society that spawns it, therefore it should come as no surprise if drug references start appearing in our TV commercials. After all, we live in a culture that seems obsessed with the desire for euphoric altered states.

If it sometimes seems that the media is overstating the case, consider this. While writing this article I got a call from a company specialising in corporate sponsorship, who wondered if I could say, roughly, how many tablets of Ecstasy were consumed in Britain each year. The reason? "Because we're pitching for a big account with a soft drinks company, see, and that's their market..."

Wired World will be broadcast this Sunday on Channel 4 at 8 pm.

the thing about...

Doc Martens

If one item of clothing could claim the longest history of marking the generation gap, Dr Marten's boots - "DMs" - must compete for that noble accolade. For nigh-on 20 years, parents have been pulling faces as their offspring laced themselves into big green boots, big brown boots, and big black boots.

Like jeans and leather jackets before them, such navy clothing has come to symbolise rugged, if uniform, individualism. Back in the mid-Seventies, they meant steel toe caps. Skinheads, apparently, always bought their DMs with steel toe caps, the better to kick people. This was partly just rumour: skinheads, after all, tended to work in the building and allied trades, and needed toe caps to fend off falling girders.

Things have got a bit more sophisticated since then. The range now includes DMs in velvet (£44.99), pink snakeskin (£44.99) and pink and gold lace (£39.99).

So what is the appeal of these clodhoppers? Firstly, they look terrible with twinsties, suits, shirt-dresses and anything else that even hints at respectability. Which means that when you combine the two, you are Making a Statement. No one has ever put a finger on what that statement might actually be, but everyone recognises it. Secondly, they are so ugly, they make your feet look great, in a perverse sort of way. Having very unladylike size nines, I can still remember the thrill of trying my first pair, looking down and realising that my feet were so huge they looked tiny. Furthermore, ending your body in Noddy-blobs makes your legs look skinny. For girls, also, they make miniskirts much easier to wear: no one can accuse you of trying to look sexy when you combine the pelmet with a pair of sixteen-boles.

Also, there's the strength. DMs last forever, and that famous AirWair sole means you can walk for miles without discomfort, though they're useless for climbing mountains as they weigh a ton. And have you ever been trodden on by a stiletto heel? I have, twice: the first time it punched through the leather of my nobby girls' shoes and raised gouts of blood. The second time the wearer hit the toe of my oiled leather shoe-boots, slid off and landed in a heap on the floor. Net result: sprains for her, not a mark on me.

But the thing about Docs is this frightening thought. In the end, as those who started their sartorial lives in them refuse to ditch them in favour of more respectable footwear, Doc Martens must pass from favour with the young. They will hunt another shoe to wring groans from their aged relations. Will the current generation gap in suppressed agony as their sons and daughters slip a pair of Dr Scholls over their American tan tights?

Serena Mackesy

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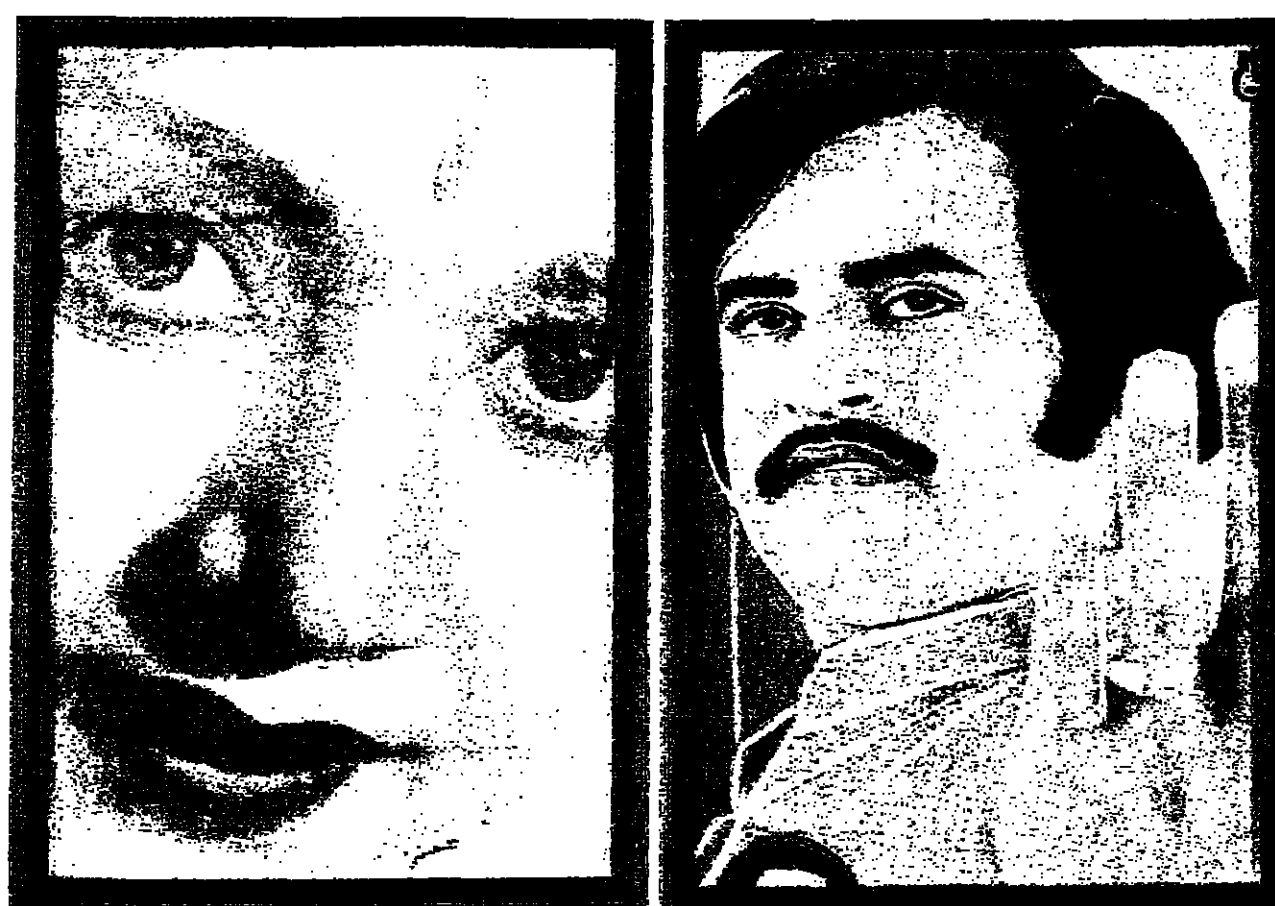
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There are stars. And there are artists



Rock stars have always been artistic. They sing, they dance, they act, they write poetry. They exhibit their potato prints. In the case of David Byrne, they're even quite good.
By Giles Smith



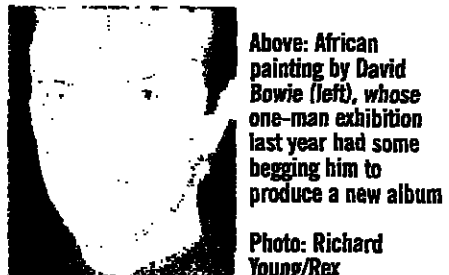
Main photographs (left to right) Byrne's 'ActionLoveGods' (1991) and 'ActionLoveGods: Rajanikant' (1991)



Above: the oil painting Elvis Costello (left) did for the sleeve of his album *Blood and Chocolate*, in essence a portrait of a ram in a crash helmet



Spot the difference: Above: Self-Portrait (after Van Gogh) by Joni Mitchell (left) which appeared on the cover of her last album, *Turbulent Indigo*



Above: African painting by David Bowie (left), whose one-man exhibition last year had some begging him to produce a new album
Photo: Richard Young/Rex

There is a form of pop art which has nothing to do with comic book figures talking and thinking in bubbles, nor with paintings of Campbell's soup cans. It is the art made by pop stars in their spare time. Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, David Bowie and Ronnie Wood of the Rolling Stones – all have chosen at some point in their careers to give the music a rest and go public with their daubs and dabbles. And now here comes the former leader of Talking Heads, David Byrne, with *Strange Ritual*, initially just the title of a track on Byrne's last album, but now also the name of an exhibition of the singer, songwriter and guitarist's photographs at the Photographers' Gallery in London. The images on show are, along with many further Byrne photos, gathered into an impressively-bound book called, again, *Strange Ritual*. No singing, no guitars, just "an extraordinary document of contemporary culture in our diverse world by one of its keenest observers", that's according to Faber & Faber, who publish the book.

History suggests that when pop musicians do art, it is well to stand clear. Brave is he that ventures down that road, for it is a road spattered with queasy oils, litty snaps and disastrous gouaches. Attempting heroically to narrow the chasm between the Turners – Tina and JMW – the rock star with his hopeful portfolio is frequently the victim of a piece of faulty logic: you liked the album, so you'll love the watercolours. A number of the guilty at least confine themselves to exhibiting their work on their own album sleeves, rather than for sale in public galleries. Bob Dylan, for instance, painted the big head which looks out at us from the cover of the *Self-Portrait* album. (It would make thematic sense if this were indeed a self-portrait, but the evidence offered by this mostly pale blue and tangerine blob with one black ear, is not conclusive.)

Nick Mason of Pink Floyd, meanwhile, did the pen-and-ink number on the front of *Relics*, depicting what appears to be an elaborate steam-organ in a style in which Heath Robinson meets Aubrey Beardsley (and doesn't much get on with him). And Elvis Costello did the oil painting of the ram in a crash helmet which appears on the sleeve of *Blood & Chocolate* (though he hid behind the name Eamonn Singer in the hope that no one would notice).

Not content with setting before us products hot from his sketchbook, John Lennon went so far as to offer up some of his juvenilia for the cover of *Walls and Bridges*, including, most prominently, a doodle of Arsenal playing Newcastle in the 1952 FA Cup Final, when Lennon was (as he touchingly informed us at the top of the picture) "Age 11". A similar effect was achieved much more recently by Sinead O'Connor in her painting for the sleeve of her *Universal Mother* album – a picture of two naked figures and a wall in a hail of asteroids, or of two people climbing inside an enormous peacock, depending on how you look at it. Its execution might be thought to recapture some of the artist's child-like energies – though less sympathetic analysts will simply think a kid did it with a potato.

But still more bold, David Bowie held his first one-man show last year in London, filling a chichi West-End place with a selection of wooden heads and a batch of computer-treated images, in which some claimed to detect the hand of greatness while others reached hastily for the migraine tablets.

Ronnie Wood, too, has shown his various pen-and-inks and acrylics, most of them sweetly fan-like studies of his muckers in the Stones: "Keef" with a fag on, in tense-faced communion with his axe, and so on. Joni Mitchell has exhibited paintings in London and New York. But

then Mitchell is apt to say in interviews that she regards herself as a painter first and foremost (though not with the avidity of Captain Beefheart, or rather Don van Vliet, who long ago abandoned music and withdrew to the desert to make pictures instead). Not just any old painter, either. She appeared on the cover of her 1994 album, *Turbulent Indigo*, painted in oils like a self-portrait by Van Gogh, complete with bandaged ear. Once again, the picture was one of the artist's own.

If Phil Collins were suddenly to dump on us a patiently accumulated A3 folder of earnest etchings, we would not be surprised – though we would possibly smirk. The derision that one tries (or doesn't bother) to suppress at the thought of rock stars coming over all arty on us has, at its root, a sense that the refinement of serious artistic endeavour is a considerable train-journey away from the hog-snooring world of rock'n'roll and can only look hapless there. Humour bubbles at this prospect the way it does in that classic moment from *This Is Spinal Tap* where the guitarist Nigel Tufnel, contemplating at the piano, performs the pretty and sad piece he's working on: it sounds vaguely like Rachmaninov, but he's named it "Lick My Lovepump". The rock star as hugely untalented Cubist or mock-casual Da Vinci was perhaps the only trope which Spinal Tap didn't find space for.

If anyone was going to overturn the cliché and become the first person to pass comfortably from the charts to a gallery, it was likely to be David Byrne. When so much of his work as a songwriter is observational, it could hardly shock us to discover him to have alert eyes. Also, he's always been a different sort of rock star. Some of the *Strange Ritual* photographs have appeared, differently laid-out, as sleeve illustrations for Talking Heads records: "Chair Quaternion", for instance, a set of four, inexplicably funny pictures of an armchair pushed variously on to its sides and back and shot in front of a bland yellow curtain. These pictures were taken at the Sunset Marquis Hotel in Los Angeles, and that says it all really. Rather than trashing hotel rooms, Byrne is the kind of rock star who mildly re-arranges them in the pursuit of a photo-opportunity.

Byrne took these photographs, for the most part, while on tour as a musician. Touring is notoriously a monotonous and brain-depleting experience, but Byrne makes it look a lot more exciting. There are photos of a car wreck and of a Shinto shrine. There is a picture of something in a glass case purporting to be the hand and arm of St John the Baptist, on exhibition in Istanbul. There's a brightly-coloured vending machine, shot up close in Tokyo. There are pieces of alarmed graffiti, titled (by Byrne)

"Visionary Messages". Previously discrete cultures mix and merge here in variously cheerful and chaotic ways. There are pictures of relics and pictures of garbage, and no suggestion that the latter is any less spirited than the former.

That said, a couple of the images suggest only the imponderable weight of a touring rock star's downtime. At what kind of loose end do you have to be to take an extended series of Polaroids of your own hands? More arresting perhaps are the pictures in which the pop artist borrows from pop art. These are the large colour photographs taken in supermarkets, showing ranks of stacked goods: cans of one-step oven cleaner, packets of mothballs, boxes of Wonderfool, tubes of Colgate, whose brightly-coloured towers turn into a kind of kinetic art when abruptly cropped and seen on a flat plain.

It's a shame the Photographers' Gallery has either chosen, or had made available to them, what are perhaps the least interesting images in the *Strange Ritual* book. These are those hands (part of a short series of Polaroid montages) and the series titled "ActionLove Gods", photographs of representations of faces, many of them found on film posters in Madras, which seem somewhat baldly appropriated.

There are photographs of the jackets of books which Byrne has picked up, attracted by, among other things, the magnificent promises contained in their titles: *How To Do All Things*, *The Truth About Mars*, *The Book of Knowledge* (this one rather despairingly thin and tattered). In an interview with *Creative Camera*, partly reproduced at the back of *Strange Ritual*, Byrne says of these pictures: "Books are meant to be read, not treated as objects to be photographed," adding, rather portentously, that here "their function has been perverted and destroyed". This sounds dark and devious, though it's not clear why that shouldn't be the effect of photographing absolutely anything. These pictures work a far simpler trick: the passing on of a good joke. It is barrenly academic to wonder whether we would be interested in these photographs if anybody else less famous had taken them. They come to us announced as pictures by David Byrne, and part of our curiosity in them is an extension of our curiosity about him. In fact one of the pleasures of going over the book is in thinking, "Isn't it just like what we know about David Byrne that he would want to take a photograph of that?" This is not to say the pictures will be of limited interest to people unfamiliar with or unconcerned by Byrne's work as a musician, but a bit of background probably helps. As with the work of Ronnie Wood – or maybe not.

Until 9 March. Contact: 0171-831 1772

Seven ways to satisfy an appetite for violent death

Here is a modest paradox about thrillers – the more effective they are the less you are likely to see. Indeed, a film that you can stare at without a quiver of disquiet could well be dismissed as "unwatchable". A highly watchable thriller, on the other hand, can be one in which you spend large portions of your time staring at your shoes, allowing the climax on the soundtrack to tell you when it is once again safe to let your eyes stray towards the screen.

Seven, the subject of a veritable tsunami of word-of-mouth recommendation, falls into the latter category. Indeed, I found myself wondering during some sections whether I might be able to claim a small discount on the ticket price, in the way that blind television viewers are allowed to reclaim a tiny portion of their licence fee.

But *Seven* achieves its effect in a way entirely at odds with more conventional

thrillers. The action takes place in a series of dingy interiors, rooms into which the light seems to have fought its way before sinking down exhausted. The place and time are indeterminate – an unspecified metropolitan U-bend. There's no fixed horizon here, so that the swells of dread and disgust that accompany each successive crime mount to a queasy disorientation. The policeman carry torches with them everywhere and you can understand why – the city sits beneath a permanent depression, overcast and weeping.

All of this is, to say the least, very effective. From its deranged credit sequence onwards *Seven* works on you with a madly even pressure, apparently indifferent to the requirements of form. Instead of the conventional Hollywood rollercoaster – slow, ratcheted pulls to an invisible drop, followed by a plunge of action – the ride is surprisingly flat, just a numb



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

display of consequences. You never see the killer preparing to strike – obligatory in most serial-killer movies – only a forensic account of the mess he leaves behind him. Virtually everything is posthumous in this film. And it's here, rather than in moments of tension, that more squeamish viewers will have to avert their eyes. Every detail of morbid pathology, every scuttling infestation of the crime scene, is lovingly displayed.

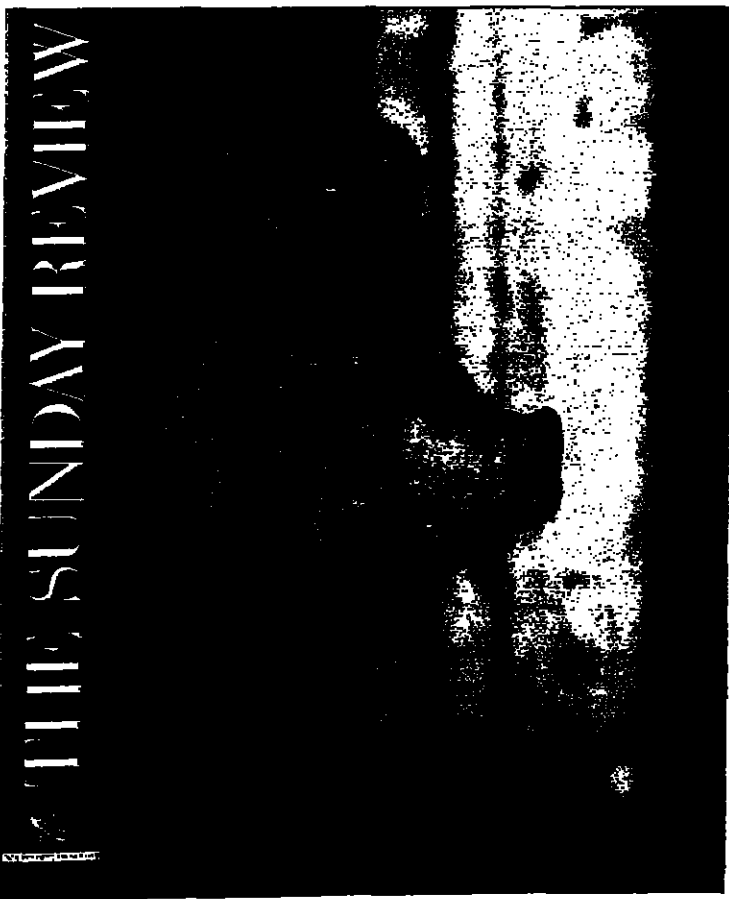
This seems to have been mistaken by some viewers, and some critics too, as a form of integrity, a way of being unblinking about the

reality of violence. But something odd is going on. These scenes are offered for our viewing pleasure, as odd as that might seem to those sensitive souls whose first instinct is to bury their head in their hands when a decomposing corpse displays its livid charms. The killer at the heart of *Seven* is an artist of cruelty, painstaking in his delivery of pain. And we are enlisted as an enthusiastic audience for his work, eager for each successive exhibition, which must exceed its predecessor in novelty and flair.

But though the film pretends to be icy consistent in its gaze, it betrays its muddled morality in its final twist. In only one of the murders are we not permitted to stare at the indignity of death, specifically because this is the only victim the film has allowed us to form a relationship with. This dispatch is as cruel and bloody as its predecessors, as susceptible to the genius of

special effects, but the camera will not look. To have done so would have been unacceptable to the audience, a horror too far. And, without giving anything away, that isn't because some dreadful peak of ingenuity has been reached by the killer, rather because to gawp at someone we know would make it abundantly clear to moviegoers exactly what they have been doing for the preceding 80 minutes – satisfying an appetite for violent death. It isn't, in other words, because the final deed simply couldn't be shown but because it would have felt improper for us to look.

This isn't unblinking at all. It is simply to discriminate between disposable people – defence lawyers, drug-dealers and the overweight – and those we notionally care about. For all the allusions to Thomas Aquinas and Milton, *Seven* is no more elevated in its principle than the average Stallone blockbuster.



Grunt expectations: Portia the pig loved whisky, mated with a dog and succumbed to depression. Elspeth Barker ponders the troubled psyche of her prize pet porker

Plus: Suzanne Glass on the strength and the sorrow of Leah Rabin

And Kenneth Branagh and Helena Bonham Carter in Italy

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Working both sides of the street

Freud was baffled by it, homosexuals deplore it, David Bowie regrets it and American students love it. Bisexuality still evades definition. By Roger Clarke



Who, us? James Stewart, Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn striving to conceal the bisexual undercurrent in *The Philadelphia Story* (1940)

Vice Versa: Bisexuality and the Eroticism of Everyday Life by Marjorie Garber, Hamish Hamilton, £25

Compared with everyone else, Woody Allen once observed, a bisexual at a party had a fifty-percent better chance of going home with someone at the end of the evening. This would appear to be an amusingly self-evident truth; yet as Professor Marjorie Garber demonstrates in her exhaustive and often magisterial book on the subject of "switch-hitters", it would be equally true to say bisexuals would have rather less chance than anyone else at the party.

Their unpopularity is widespread. Heterosexuals quite irrationally fear bisexuals are a conduit for Aids. Gays perceive bisexuals as double agents who won't "come out" and be good homosexuals. They're seen as treacherous and shifty, as bearers of a wrath-of-God disease on the goody, as subverters of marriage — who'd want to go home with one of them? "Saying I was bisexual was the biggest mistake I ever made," David Bowie told *Rolling Stone* in the mid-Eighties.

Marjorie Garber tells us that, these days, American college kids increasingly define themselves as bisexual, much to the disgust of older gay activists. Bisexual chic is stalking the media. But what is "a bisexual"? It's not clear. Freud had at least five definitions of the term. In statistical studies, bisexuals are lumped together with gays, though logically they might as well be counted heterosexual. No-one is ever "converted" to bisexuality. Bisexuals are always sandwiched between heterosexuality and homosexuality (unfairly perpetrating the notion of an immature, transitional state, Garber argues convincingly).

They are everywhere and nowhere (either 80 per cent of the population or one per cent, according to which figures you believe). This visible-invisible paradox is one of Garber's most arresting motifs. She is like a research chemist looking for a mysterious, rare element which is in fact very common, depending on how it is perceived.

Wilhelm Fleiss, an Ear, Nose and Throat surgeon from Berlin, first dreamed up the modern notion of "bisexuality" in the 1890s. From the first, bisexuality was more about theory than etiology; it certainly a gateway to other worlds but perhaps it was simultaneously a world itself. "I do not in the least underestimate bisexuality," Freud wrote to Fleiss in 1898. "I expect it to provide all further enlightenment."

But Freud never managed his bisexual theory of everything. Bisexuality, notes Garber with



So do I: Grief, York and Minelli in *Cabaret* (1972)

a little unseemly triumphalism in her tone, "undoes statistics, confounds dimorphism...no callipers fit the shape of desire, which remains thickly unquantifiable by even the most finely tested instruments". Jung fared little better; his conclusions about immutable male and female principles are shakier than would first appear (Freud thought female characteristics in boys included "shyness, modesty and the need for instruction").

The ancient certainties of New Agers about male and female principles are no more certain than some of the dithering proscriptions in Leviticus against depilating goats. And what of the ancient idea of the hermaphrodite? Garber upbraids one critic for praising the film of *Orlando* for its sexually "transcendent" quality. "The real question about androgyny," notes Garber acidly, "is how it comes to mean both sexlessness and sexiness at the same time. What's sexy about crossover gender cues, or sexual misreading, or undecipherable gender?" What indeed?

We are communal creatures and no-one can exist without a tribe. So it's hardly surprising that much of Garber's book is taken up with reclaiming various historical figures, films and books as "bisexual". One brilliant section concludes that love triangles in movies are a bisexual paradigm (but how did she miss out on the Cary Grant/James Stewart/Katharine Hepburn undercurrents in *The Philadelphia Story*?)

Yet reclaiming bisexuals is fraught with difficulties since, even by the end of the book, we still have no definition of bisexuality. Is it "lifestyle", "sexual attitude" or "sexuality"?

Would a gay man who has one sexual encounter with a woman become automatically bisexual for the rest of his life? How many years would have to elapse before he was gay again? Does Calvin Klein's sequence of perfumes — "Obsession", "Escape" and the bisexual stink of "CK" — adequately mirror his recent flight from married life into the arms of a man?

While men like Leonard Bernstein and Lord Byron were "sequential" bisexuals all their lives (alternating male and female lovers at random), Oscar Wilde was clearly not. Garber claims him as a bisexual simply because he kept in friendly touch with his wife after the trial, and, in his last year in Paris, indulged in a dismal and distressing visit to a female prostitute. Vita Sackville-West also seems a bad example of a bisexual; she was an androgyne who preferred women and was married to a gay man. Didn't Rimbaud call himself a "widowed soul" for not having a female partner? And didn't William Burroughs marry and have a son? I note Garber steers well clear of reclaiming him (he'd have come round with a shotgun next day).

Garber puzzlingly segues the martial pederasty of ancient Greece into modern bisexuality, noting a Greek preference for "women and boys" from Meleager onwards. Yet having spent pages attacking the sloppy definitions of "gay" and "bisexual" everywhere, from Simon LeVay's autopsies on gay brains to *Cosmopolitan* surveys, Garber herself sloppily uses the term "men and boys" as a particular sexual preference. But men who like boys do not like fully-grown men. Byron didn't like "women and boys

and men". He liked women and boys.

I'm also intrigued that Garber spends the whole of this massive, 607-page book discussing "desire" and "eroticism" without once addressing the concept of "disgust". De Sade knew that desire and disgust were two sides of a coin. Both homosexuality and heterosexuality are defined, not only by what they desire, but what they actively don't desire. What people have always found baffling about the concept of bisexuality is that there appears to be no disgust in it; the sexual organs of each sex are equally attractive. And are male bisexuals the same as female bisexuals?

I'm really not sure after reading this book whether I'm bisexual or not, or whether bisexuality "exists". Garber finishes with an image from Jacques Derrida: why are two left shoes together not called a pair of shoes? Resisting the temptation to say "because they're useless", this is none the less an interesting analogue for the bisexual dilemma which says, effectively: Why aren't three shoes called a pair of shoes?

Garber's towering achievement is to stake out a territory, to propose a kind of universal and unacknowledged "erotic" field which touches us invisibly and constantly. The side issues she covers (male/female givens and gay/straight arrogance) are often more significant than the subject she appears to be tackling head-on. At one point Garber, quite legitimately, reclaims vampirism from gay studies as a clear bisexual parable. Are these shadows real? Do bisexuals exist? No, you might conclude. But maybe bisexuality does.

Hit by a macho avalanche

A mountaineer's memoirs double up as an exploration of masculinism. By Martin Booth

Recent years have seen the emergence of a literary trend dedicated to the re-assertion of male machismo — the kind of thing you used to find in ripping yarns and jingoistic, occasionally racist, tales by writers such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and O. Henry. This vogue hit a peak with the publication of American poet Robert Bly's male manifesto, *Iron John*, and true stories such as Andy McNab's *Bravo Two Zero*, a narrative of hard-core male endurance and courage triumphing over destiny and military stupidity.

This renaissance of bookish masculinity was perhaps inevitable after three decades of feminist propaganda which did neither gender any real good. In fact, it split them apart, forcing an unnatural divide between two fundamental aspects of humanity which had previously gained strength from each other before being hijacked for the pontification of politically

correct agendas. To many, the future seemed to lie, not in compromise or understanding but in stressing the difference between the sexes, a variance further complicated by the clamorous proclamations of the gay community.

Into this muddled, unsatisfactory situation there now arrives, however, a new perspective promoted by a writer who initially seems a most unlikely seer. Joe Simpson looks at first sight to be a character straight out of *Boy's Own Paper*: tough and good-looking enough to be an extra in *Goldeneye*, he is a mountaineer of repute whose courage and tenacity for life have been proven many times on glaciers and sheer rock-faces.

This, his third book, starts with a description of being hit by an avalanche while climbing an unscaled Himalayan peak and goes on to recall such encounters as a brush with the Peruvian police — for whom civil rights and human

Storms of Silence
by Joe Simpson
Cape, £17.99

dignity are not priorities — and a violent contretemps with a tattooed yob over a pub pool table in Sheffield. These events test Simpson's manhood, in one way or another.

Yet they do not test him in the manner one might expect, for Simpson, though used to battling the elements on a near-vertical mountain, is not one for belligerence. He has learnt, as his book explains with fascinating clarity, that the natural way to overcome aggression, which is of itself born of primal fear and anxiety, is not to give vent to these emotions but to assimilate them into a conscious understanding of what drives them.

By doing this, he also comes to appreciate what constitutes his own essential masculinity and what underlies the primitive instincts which drive our species towards acts of barbarity.

There is a certain homespun quality to Simpson's thinking. He faces not only human but also natural violence with the stoicism of one who has embraced their potentialities and he sometimes allows the loneliness of the mountains to impinge upon him.

High in the Peruvian Andes, he hears the voices of the ghosts of the thousands killed in a earthquake in the valley below — the sounds revitalising memories of a visit, as a child, to the site of a concentration camp whilst, in the wastes of Tibet, the spiritual home of transcendental meditation, he compares the raw beauty of nature with the destruction of Tibetan culture by Chinese imperialism.

Simpson's interpretations of his

experiences may be unsophisticated but they are nevertheless genuine and meaningful. By way of his approach to life, which is essentially masculine, he taps into an intrinsic inner peace, through which he seeks to develop a personal psychological creed of understanding and self-determination, using this to explain to himself and his reader the everyday cruelties, injustices and inhumanity of modern life.

Lavishly illustrated with the author's colour photographs — the most moving image is of Nepalese toddlers playing in the street with a bottle of Chinese rice wine — this immensely accessible book offers a unique re-interpretation of masculinity. It seeks to prove that to be male does not necessarily mean to be violent and dominating but also sensitive, considerate and, above all else, gentle. In doing so, it offers a ray of hope to an increasingly bleak and vicious society.

Where did everybody go?

A new reference work on modern Britain without Samantha Fox or John Redwood? Tut-tut, says William Hartston

Richard Branson, Eddie George, the Duchess of York, the Duke of York, Sir Cliff Richard and Jeremy Isaacs. What do they all have in common? Answer: there is not the slightest reference to any of them in the new Cassell *Dictionary of Modern Britain*. The publisher's blurb describes the book as: "A comprehensive A-Z guide to the people, events, issues, controversies and crises that have made the headlines over the past 50 year period." We are told "the dictionary's focus is a broad one", yet neither of those claims survives a cursory look through the headwords or index of personal names. There is Fox, Sir Marcus, but not

Fox, Samantha; Jones, Jack and Jones, Steve, but not Harvey-Jones. Sir John: Brown, Gordon, but not Brown, Cedric. I could go on. I shall go on. John Birt and Producer Choice are there, but where are Sir Robin Day and Jeremy Paxman? Even Marmaduke Hussey is absent. There's Ingham, Bernard, but not Ingrams, Richard, despite the nine-line entry for *Private Eye*, and search as you might, you will find no reference to that controversial headline-maker and social scene shifter, Mr Paul Gascoigne.

The dictionary's focus is a narrow one, concentrating primarily on political names and concepts. Sport and entertainment, which form so large a part of many people's experience of modern Britain, play no part. Atherton, Michael and Boycott, Geoffrey have been given out by the editors; Charlton, Bobby and Matthews, Stanley have been sent off. Hopkins, Sir Anthony and Gielgud, Sir John, are left waiting in the wings.

The entries that remain are, it must be acknowledged, generally

Dictionary of Modern Britain
edited by Joseph and Sagar
Cassell, £18.99

well written in a succinct and informative style. The writers and editors have also shown admirable restraint in keeping all the entries brief and to the point. Even Margaret Thatcher is allowed fewer than 450 words.

If you want to know the date of the Clapham Rail Crash, you will find it under 'Clapham Rail Crash'; if you need to what all the fuss is over the Social Chapter, you have only to look up 'Social Chapter' and follow the cross references to 'Maastricht', 'Conservative', 'opting out' and 'social charter'. If you need to find out what crime, other than high treason, still warrants the death penalty, it's there under 'Capital Punishment'. Not all the headwords, however, are quite so well chosen. In any dictionary or

encyclopedia in which the entries are arranged alphabetically rather than thematically, the headwords should be things people are likely to look up. But who would ever head directly towards 'men in grey suits' or 'put up or shut up'?

The lack of a general index makes some things hard to find. Having failed to find Smith, Andreas Whitlam siding alongside Smiths, Ian, John, T Dan and Tim, I was distressed to find no entry at all for 'Independent, The'. There's no entry for 'Times, The' either, though you will find both of them mentioned in a brief entry for 'Broadsheets'.

Criticising a book for what it omits is, of course, not playing fair, but criteria for inclusion seem inconsistent. There are entries to be found under 'Beast of Bolsover' and 'Skinner, Dennis', but remarkably no entry of his own for Redwood, John. There is an entry for 'Vulcan', but only the RAF jet-powered bomber. One is left with the suspicion that the Cassell *Dictionary of Modern Britain* has been

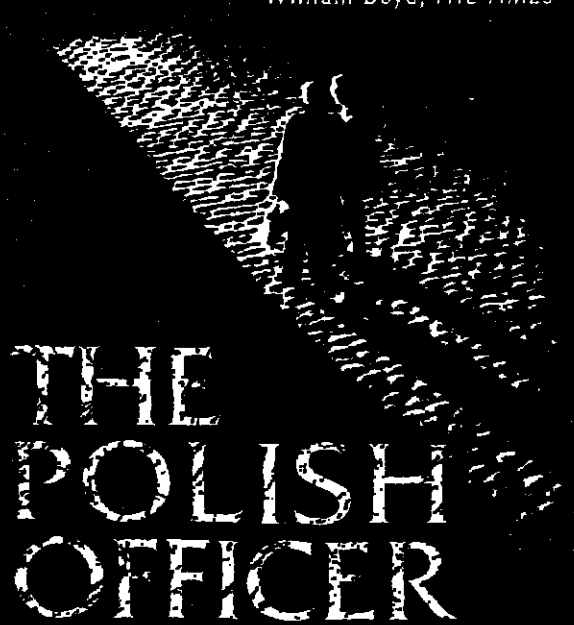
compiled, like far too many modern reference works, primarily by extracting from an all-encompassing database those items relevant to a specific theme. That suspicion is heightened when one compares this work with the Cassell *Dictionary of Modern Politics* (now available in paperback, £9.99). Where headwords coincide, the entries are often identical. Surely the entry on H-Bomb in a dictionary of modern Britain ought not to be word for word the same as the entry in a dictionary of modern politics.

With no room in modern Britain for science (where are Roger Penrose and Richard Dawkins?), invention (Sir Clive Sinclair and Christopher Cockerell?), entrepreneurial management (Michael Edwards and James Goldsmith?) or Monty Python's Flying Circus, what remains is all rather dull and worthy. This is not a dictionary of the modern Britain we all know and love.

But, to end on a positive note, there's no mention of Jeffrey Archer either.

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The screech marks of history

A study of the last five million years reveals a recurring pattern of settled humanity and galactic upheaval. John Gribbin reports

The idea that climatic changes played a major part in human evolution, not so much forcing our ancestors out of the trees as killing the trees and leaving our ancestors behind, is now so familiar and well established that it comes as a surprise to find a writer of Colin Tudge's pedigree using it as the foundation stone for a new book. But then, as *The Day Before Yesterday* makes clear, Tudge isn't really interested in human beings. What he cares about are non-human mammals, and the role of human beings as an environmental pressure on other mammals. Not so much five million years of human history, as five million years of the impact of humankind on other species.

Apart from the relatively gentle processes of climatic change, it is now clear that the pattern of evolution on earth has been shaped by several major catastrophes, some possibly caused by the impact of objects from space, which on five occasions have wiped out more than 50 per cent of all species alive at the time. Our activities are now beginning to rival those natural catastrophes, and as Tudge puts it, the future evolution of living things on Earth will "depend very much on our actions over the next few hundred years."

This is dramatic, attention grabbing stuff. Unfortunately, the style and presentation of the

The Day Before Yesterday:
Five million years of human history by Colin Tudge
Cape, £18.99

book don't do justice to the drama of its contents. Coming from a background in journalism, Tudge is happy to tackle any subject, and provides us with a workmanlike account of the events which shaped the Earth and its environment in the eons leading up to the five million years that are his special interest. But this geological and geophysical background is no more than workmanlike, and is not always entirely accurate (as in the discussion of the greenhouse effect). This would matter less if it were not inevitable that the introductory material should come first. The book only really comes alive in Chapter four, when we learn from Tudge the zoologist (who loves his subject) how many other species are sharing the planet with us, discover the advantages of being big or small, and meet the mammals.

Even so, the casual reader still has one hurdle to overcome. In his days as features editor of *New Scientist*, Tudge would rightly rap contributors (myself included) over the knuckles for

lapsing into the passive, and for using jargon or longer than necessary words. Here, his style sometimes verges on the pompous, dotted with the odd "hence" and containing such gruesome constructions as "of particular relevance to Britain is the behaviour of the Gulf Stream" and "we may legitimately doubt whether the forest-bound common ancestors would have made the transition to the ground if...". It almost looks as if the text was completed in a rush - particularly unfortunate since Tudge's publishers make much of the fact that each of his previous two books was short-listed for the Science Book Prize. By his own high standards, this is not Tudge at his best.

By the standards of most books about science for non-scientists, though, it is still pretty good stuff. His discussion of the importance of metabolic rates and the role of grass in determining the kinds of creatures that live on Earth is utterly absorbing, as are many other vignettes, and although the story of human origins is familiar, he tells it well, adding spice to the mix with some ideas which, he acknowledges, are not yet fully established and must technically be regarded as speculation.

The underlying theme is the role of what is known as "punctuated equilibrium in evolution" - the idea that while the world exists in a settled state, species

Social climbing: Darwinian evolution, as seen by Punch, 1882

change little, becoming slowly more fitted to the prevailing environment, but that when an upheaval occurs (an ice age, or meteoritic impact) many species die and the survivors diversify to fill the newly available ecological niches. None of this, of course, is in any sense anti-Darwinian; both the periods of stasis and the periods of rapid change following a disaster exactly follow the rules of Darwinian evolution by natural selection. Disasters have been the punctuation marks of evolution, and now we are both the latest of these marks and one of

the players in the evolutionary game.

Unlike some doom-sayers, Tudge sees this human influence as having already played a part in changing the pattern of life on earth by the end of the latest Ice Age, and blames our ancestors for the huge numbers of creatures that disappeared all over the world in the late Pleistocene (the geological epoch which ended about 10,000 years ago), as well as for the way species continue to die *en masse* today.

The obligatory discourse on "what to do" makes for a down-

beat ending, and Tudge misses a trick in his discussion of the future of human evolution by neglecting to speculate about the possibilities of genetic engineering. He also short-changes his readers (their appetites whetted by his enthusiasm) by not providing them with a guide to further reading. This is Tudge in cruise mode, using auto-pilot to turn out a rather nice book with the minimum of effort. The irritating thing is that had he made the effort it could have been excellent. It might even have got him to the top of that Science Book Prize shortlist.



All you need to know about the books you meant to read



This week:

ANNA KARENINA (1877)
by Leo Tolstoy

Plot: A great domestic epic that seeks to answer questions of profound and childish simplicity: "How should one live?" "What must we be and do?" The story is sculpted from three marriages, but focuses on Anna, bored and beautiful, married to a stuffy bureaucratic official, who meets the virile Vronsky, an officer and a gentleman, more or less. He chases her home to St Petersburg. They ignite into an affair. Karenin, humiliated but powerless, eventually grants a divorce but keeps his son. Anna and Vronsky expelled from perfumed society, lead an increasingly artificial life. Having thrown off the roles of mother and wife, Anna is restricted to being a self-absorbed mistress. It is not enough; she kills herself. Vronsky, filled with remorse, pushes off to war.

Theme: Men and women must live by the natural laws of marriage and truth. Anna's adultery condemns her to neurotic narcissism. Another character's search for spiritual "answers" is rewarded and his soul resurrected.

Style: Tolstoy's approach to writing is another dimension of his moral universe: "The only possible order for the only possible words."

Chief strengths: Isaiah Berlin points out that Tolstoy's empirical response to the world's richness is at odds with his desire for rigid rules and regulations. No matter how relentlessly the author strives to punish Anna, she remains uniquely vibrant and lovable.

Chief weakness: Anna Akhmatova and D.H. Lawrence both objected to Tolstoy's use of Anna's sexuality as an instrument of torture, rather than as a mode of self-expression.

What they thought of it then: The Russian reading public were enthralled but the liberal critics disliked the reactionary slant. Dostoevsky thought it "old fashioned".

What we think of it now: Much admired even though the entire thrust of the novel could not be less PC. Modern critics pay close attention to the medium but avoid the rebarbative message.

Responsible for: *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Lawrence's reworking of the eternal triangle in terms of the twin English obsessions with sex and class. Also the 1930s film, where Garbo smouldered in furs (again).

Apparitions can be deceptive

Italian peasants, Catholicism, visionaries, land wars, a family in decline, a search for roots... Harriet Paterson reads a first novel steeped in cliché

Novelists should perhaps not be judged by their day job, but as editor of the *Catholic Herald*, Cristina Odone might be expected to treat religion as a slightly more substantial matter than she does in this, her first book. Instead she gives us a heroine who wears white dresses and has daily conversations with the Virgin Mary. Visionaries can make fascinating material, but the meaning of Santarella's experience is never explored; she doesn't really say anything at all,

just wafts in and out surrounded by light, looking rapt and leaving a backwash of embarrassing prose behind her: "the figure, bright against the sky, continued to move away from his side. Till she glowed in the horizon like the first star."

This purple piety is exactly the kind of thing that gives Catholicism a bad name, and it doesn't do much for the novel either. Structurally it leads to a spurious secondary plot as the villagers start planning to build a Marian shrine, a miracle cen-

The Shrine
by Cristina Odone
Weidenfeld, £14.99

tre to attract pilgrims and therefore cashflow: purity and innocence exploited by material greed and so on. This could perhaps work as a comedy of manners if it were all satire, but Santarella is clearly meant to be the Real Thing and is there-

fore not funny. Meanwhile the main weight of the plot lies with the gradual decline of the Ferrari family, the local bigwigs. The father dies, leaving a son and daughter who are faced with selling the family house and lands to pay his debts. Cristina Odone tries her hand at a bit of Marcel Pagnol community rivalry intrigue about who gets the land, but the sale happens too soon for one to have become involved with any of the interested parties.

Apart from this, nothing much

happens to the brother or the sister for the rest of the book; Francesco is in a bitter marriage to a wife back in England, a purely token character, and is wondering whether to come back to his "roots" in the village. Alma finishes one affair with a man she doesn't love and starts another which also fails to go anywhere.

The narrative slides past on well-oiled clichés, people welling over with satisfaction or falling into hushed anticipation, whilst telling

each other, "I want an end to this restlessness." But the real problem is that the author doesn't seem to have decided what sort of book this is. Alma's love life and Francesco's existential angst are pitched seriously enough, with a point somewhere about the confusion and severance from traditional values of the thirty-ish generation in Italy. But the Italian colour is standard, nothing you couldn't piece together from a couple of healthy preconceptions and the menu of an SW7 trattoria.



Paperbacks

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst



Queen Mother by Penelope Mortimer (Deutsch, £9.99)

The House of Windsor has a habit of picking English roses, only to watch them wither in the sun. After a painful honeymoon, followed by a well-publicised Australian tour without the newborn, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon dedicated her life to shaping her reluctant husband into something resembling a king. Worth reading, if only for Mortimer's evocation of Edwardian married life.



Boyfriends and Girlfriends by Douglas Dunn (Faber, £5.99)

Douglas Dunn's short stories are the kind best read out loud. Conspiratorial in tone, precise in expression, his Scottish voices ring proudly through the cramped rooms and damp gardens of small-town respectability: Mrs Boyd-Porteous, who takes in convent girls for the summer, the local builder Monty Gault who fixes houses and people. They leave you wanting more.



Present Laughter: An Anthology of Comic Writing ed. by Malcolm Bradbury (Phoenix, £9.09)

Uninspiring selection of post-war comic writing but handy for students attending a course on the subject (in East Anglia perhaps). There are set-texts from Evelyn Waugh, Angus Wilson and Muriel Spark; but if you're looking for a good laugh, it's hard to believe you'll find it in the likes of Jorge Luis Borges, Margaret Atwood or Milan Kundera.



Mimi's Ghost by Tim Parks (Minerva, £6.99)

Morris finds Paola revolting. Sprawled across the bed, nipples poking through her silk night-ette "like Cadbury's chocolate buttons", she destroys the lines of his brand new luxury condo. He shouldn't have married her, and he definitely shouldn't have murdered her sister, Mimi, with whose ghost he speaks daily on his car phone. A hilarious sequel to *Cara Massimina*.



Paris Interzone by James Campbell (Minerva, £7.99)

Beginning with Richard Wright's arrival in Paris shortly after the war, Campbell chronicles that other generation of expatriates on the Left Bank. Some black American writers, like Chester Himes, blossomed there; others, like Wright, may have dried up; but the most notorious black American novel of the time was written by a white Parisian, Boris Vian.

The State We're In
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WILL HUTTON

THE NEW AND REVISED EDITION

The Road to Margate Pier (with Vince, Vic, Lenny and Ray)

A new novel by the author of *Waterland* is a bitty but lifelike tribute to human variety. By Hugo Barnacle

Last Orders by Graham Swift, Picador, £15.99

Jack Dodds, family butcher, leaves instructions that his ashes should be scattered off Margate Pier. Three friends and his adopted son Vince drive down from Bermondsey to do the job. They get stuck in traffic at New Cross. Ray, Jack's old Desert Rat pal, thinks: "We ought to have a flashing sign up: ASHES."

They are, in fact, pretty conspicuous as it is. Vince, who refused to follow Jack into the meat business, trained as a mechanic in the army and is now a used-car dealer, so the excursion is taking place aboard the pride of his stock, a vast royal blue Mercedes 380SEL with whitewall tyres.

Lenny Tate, in the back with Ray, makes a point of repeating, "Every car's the same in a snarl-up, ain't it?" This is to annoy Vince because Vince knocked up Lenny's daughter Sally in 1964. Lenny also makes a point of asking after Vince's daughter because he knows Vince has sold her to an Arab and feels bad about it. (The deal seems to be that the Arab can keep her as

long as he keeps buying cars.) Lenny is another Desert Rat, but he was in the artillery and didn't know Ray and Jack then. He's a retired fruit-and-veg man and a failed pugilist: "Gunner Tate, middleweight. Always pissed, always late."

Vic Tucker, sitting in front, is the local undertaker. His shop faces Jack's across the high street. "Tucker and Sons" - sounds all right, don't it, Vince? - needles Lenny. When a row looms, which is often, Vic is the diplomat, changing the subject, suggesting lunch or a detour to the Chatham naval memorial where his friends from the Atlantic convoys are listed. The last is a masterstroke as it lets everyone get annoyed with Vic instead of each other, and you can't get very annoyed with Vic. This is partly his gentle character, partly his job. On the destroyer he was put in charge of sea burials and they said, "You want to keep in with Tucker," because in a sense he was Death. Landlubbers are just as superstitious.

Graham Swift's novel is about

death and chance. Ray, who is small, was big Jack's lucky charm in the desert, or so Jack said. Ray is also a successful gambler on horses, though he puts it down to studying figures: "If you want to beat the book-keeper, keep a book." Baby Vince was the freak survivor of the V-I that killed his parents. Jack's wife Amy took him in because their own daughter June, by mischance, was born with a severe mental handicap and had to be put in a home.

Amy won't join the outing as it's her day for visiting June, something Jack never did. Margate Pier, it turns out, was the last place they ever discussed the matter, back in 1939, so perhaps Jack wanted to make amends, but it's too late.

Ray tells most of the story, though the others chip in with short chapters. Nothing much happens, except that we learn about these people's interconnections, which become more complex than a mere summary would imply. It is all very bitty and incomplete in a lifelike, rather intriguing way, at least until we hear how Ray cleared

the dying Jack's debts by backing a 33-1 outsider at Doncaster. I think we all know what would happen if you really tried that.

As a rule, Swift is thorough. His descriptions of Kentish towns and countryside are minutely accurate. He even mentions that the car has "custom paintwork" in case some smart-alec reader remembers that Mercedes do not do loud colours like royal blue. He gives us loads of gambler's, butcher's, boxer's and undertaker's lore. However, he makes Vic insist that his trade "won't ever run short of custom." A truism but untrue. The older generation is missing half a million men who were killed in the war, and the shortfall has brought hard times to the funeral business since 1990. Vic would know that.

The novel seems longer than it is, for good and bad reasons. It is elaborate and absorbing but without a real narrative urge or unified structure. Still, Swift succeeds in his main aim, creating just the right kind of amused respect for his characters, and for human variety and mortality.



Ready for my close-up, Mr M. Henri Matisse sketches a suspicious-looking odalisque model (complete with ankle bracelet) in his studio at 1, place Charles Félix, Nice in 1927. Reproduced in 'Pleasuring Painting: Matisse's Feminine Representations' by John Elderfield (Thames & Hudson, £5.95), a brief, fascinating study rescuing Matisse from the charge that he pictured female nudes as grotesque and undifferentiated playthings.

Shopping with state secrets

The American spy Rick Ames was a gormless drunk whose bungling incompetence was matched only by that of the CIA. By Godfrey Hodgson

Sixty five years ago, the KGB succeeded in recruiting half-a-dozen idealistic young idiots at Cambridge University as secret agents, and we still haven't heard the end of it. At home and abroad, it is taken for granted that the spying of the Cambridge Five constitutes evidence of an incontrovertible nature about the corruption of Britain, or the British secret services, or the ancient universities.

So what are we to make of the CIA spies of the 1980s? There were certainly plenty of them. At the very moment when Ronald Reagan was committing the United States to battle the Evil Empire of communism - which happened also to be the precise moment when the Empire in question was turning out to have no clothes - a steady stream of the CIA's finest was rushing to flog the Free World's espionage crown jewels to the KGB's First Chief Directorate.

In 1980 David Barnett, a 12-year veteran of the CIA's Directorate of Plans, the operational wing of the agency, was convicted of selling out to

the KGB for \$80,000. In 1984, one Karl Koecher, a former Czech spy employed by the CIA, was convicted of selling the documents he translated back to Prague. In 1985, Edward Lee Howard, a senior CIA officer, escaped to Russia after betraying the CIA's best agent inside the Soviet science establishment, Ronald Pelton, of the National Security Agency, was sentenced to life imprisonment for selling electronic eavesdropping secrets.

And then there was Rick Ames. He was actually head of the Soviet section of CIA's counter-intelligence when in 1985 he simply walked into the Soviet embassy with a plastic shopping bag containing six pounds of secret papers. It was, say the authors of this riveting narrative, "the biggest stack of secret documents ever smuggled out of the CIA". Let us hope so, since it was enough to sign the death warrants of a dozen brave Russians who had been spying for the CIA. Some of those he first named escaped; later he named others, but on the basis of Ames's information, at least a dozen Soviet

Betrayal: the story of Aldrich Ames
by Weiner, Johnston and Lewis
Richard Cohen, £12.99

agents working for the United States were arrested, interrogated and shot in the back of the neck in the basement of the Lubyanka.

What are we to make of this epidemic of treason in the Washington suburbs in "the very years when Ronald Reagan was proclaiming 'morning in America'?" Are we to take it as evidence of the corruption of the society that bred them, of the universities they attended? There is, thankfully, little of the bunkum that Philby and Co. inspired about this well-researched, well-written and thorough account by three correspondents of the *New York Times*.

Certainly, Howard, Ames and their fellow-traitors were not animated by anything so misguided as ideology. They worked strictly for cash. First and

last Ames - the most damaging as well as the most gormless of the bunch - pulled down \$2.7 million. Apparently the KGB, stung by the news that the CIA was buying spies for \$1 million a throw, wanted to show that socialism, too, had temptations to offer.

The light this story sheds on the Central Intelligence Agency is not reassuring for those who count on the Agency to protect the Free World from dark forces. From first to last the Agency displayed a blend of complacency, social snobbery and general dim-wittedness it would be hard to match, even in so-called intelligence agencies elsewhere.

Rick Ames was one of the Agency's own. A WASP of the WASPs from the small-town Middle West, son of an old-line Agency hand. Neither the fact that he drank himself silly most lunchtimes nor his inability to get through his work prevented him being moved from one sensitive job to another. Once you were one of the boys, you could only move sideways not down or out.

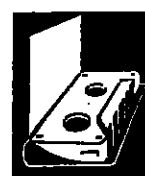
When he suddenly paid more than half a million in cash for a house and

splashed out on a Jaguar, nobody paid much attention. One young investigator who did try to find where the money came from was surprised to learn that the CIA had always been run by a moneyed elite. There were plenty of Jaguars in the parking lot, it was explained to him, owned by CIA people with trust funds.

When, after nine years in which Ames had drunkenly stolen their most deadly secrets from under their noses, he was finally caught, it was by the despised flatfoots of the FBI, not by the band of brothers at the Agency.

In the lobby at the Agency's headquarters at Langley, Virginia, there is a text from the Gospel according to St. John: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." But in all this comic tale of greed, treason and stumbling incompetence, there is no suggestion that the Agency showed any great interest in acquiring reliable information about the real world. It was far too busy playing the KGB at its own game.

Audiobooks



Quartered Safe Out Here
read by George MacDonald Fraser
The Way Ahead
read by John Ottavino

Books read by their own author can be a horror or delight. George MacDonald Fraser, now close on 70, reads his experiences of the Burma campaign in a voice as mellifluous as vintage port, and with matchless timing. *Quartered Safe Out Here* (Isis Audio Books, 8hrs 15 mins, £41.71) is funny, tragic and full of suspense, and does full justice to the caustic and courageous Cumbrians with whom Fraser served.

Microsoft wunderkind Bill Gates speaks in a high nasal drawl, and his vocal contribution to his *The Way Ahead* (Penguin, 3 hrs, £7.99) is wisely limited to a few quotes. I don't think I'd have ever settled down actually to read this vision of the digital future, but Ottavino's intelligent rendering of this abridged version provides a useful summary of what's in store.

Christina Hardymont



Avowed Intent by Lord Longford
(Warner, £7.99)

This is an engagingly chatty autobiography, far more readable than the monstrous tomes of most politicians. Born in 1905 and still vigorous, Longford has a circle of acquaintance - from Evelyn Waugh to Dennis Nilsen - that is surely unmatched. There is much unconscious humour. Of his study in *Humility*, he notes: "Anyone seriously interested in humility would benefit from reading my little book."



POPism by Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett (Pimlico, £10.00)

First out in 1981, this is an extended gossip by Andy (the art form in which he truly excelled) about his 1960s glory days. His memory is phenomenal, but some facts are dubious: did Jagger really meet Chrissie Shrimpton when cleaning house for her? Few books capture the thrill of the time more successfully, but the party ends literally with a bang: "She moved in closer, fired again, and I felt horrible pain..."



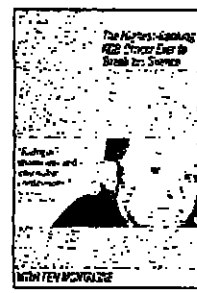
Derailed by Tim Page (Touchstone, £7.99)

This impressionistic account of a lensman's return to Nam is interwoven with dream-like recollections of conflict. Memories of horrific injuries and the "magic, glamorous edge" of war merge with vivid, pell-mell observation of the present (lavatories and dope are recurring themes). Intense, funny, sometimes plain loopy, this book merits a place alongside Herr's *Dispatches*.



An Anthropologist on Mars by Oliver Sacks (Picador, £6.99)

In his latest report from the cortical front-line, Sacks gently probes the extraordinary mental afflictions, by accident or disease, of seven individuals. They include a hippie perpetually stuck in the past, a practising surgeon with Tourette's Syndrome and Stephen Wiltshire, the autistic artist. These sympathetic but unpatronising "explorations of metamorphosis" are revealing celebrations of the mind's mysterious potential.



Spymaster by Oleg Kalugin (Smith Gryphon, £7.99)

A dark humour pervades Kalugin's story of 32 years in the KGB (he rose to be Chief of Counter-Intelligence). Though riddled by corruption, the KGB pulled off some striking successes, in particular the decoding of around one million US Navy messages in the Seventies. One of Kalugin's few regrets arises from his involvement in the murder of Georgi Markov - the only "wet job" with which he was associated.

Who's reading whom?

Wine writer Andrew Barr admires Theodore Zeldin's 'An Intimate History of Humanity' (Mmerna)

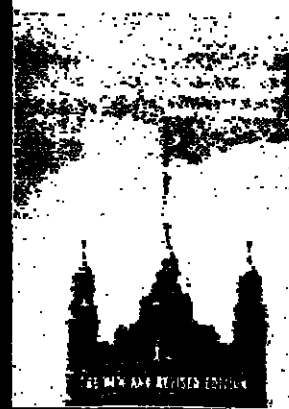


(first came across this book in a restaurant in the Old Brompton Road. They had it on sale because they thought people interested in food should also be interested in history - an enlightenment that Zeldin would share. This is a brave book for a historian to write. Historians, of all people, prefer to deal with what they know and Zeldin pushes himself beyond what he knows to breach his own central thesis: that people lead their lives within limited and limiting social and cultural parameters because new experiences force them to change, but in ways they cannot always control and anticipate.

THE BOOK THAT ROCKED THE ESTABLISHMENT

THE NUMBER ONE BESTSELLER

The State We're In



gardening

Peace of mind comes with cabbages and cordon pears

For order and fecundity, a traditional kitchen garden is hard to beat. By Anna Pavord



John Thallon, head gardener, and his team at Benington Hall near York, tend to the tunnel grows from eight different sorts of pear

Photograph: Steve Forrest/Gazelle

A traditional kitchen garden, walled round with stone or brick, is an oasis of order in a chaotic world. Ruler-straight paths divide the space into neat plots. Carefully trained fruit trees spread their arms over a sunny wall or make espaliered screens along the edges of the vegetable patches. Onions and potatoes, parsnips and peas grow in parallel lines, running from north to south to catch the best of the weather.

When you walk through a doorway into one of these private, peaceful, productive places, you shed cares like a slow worm sloughing its skin. You can keep your peace of mind for me comes with cabbages and cordon pears. Shelter and fecundity are the keywords of a walled kitchen garden (and an owner who doesn't look too keenly at the bottom line of his garden accounts – no one pretends these places are anything but labour intensive).

The best have lean-to greenhouses, often on the south wall, where they shelter crops of nectarines and peaches, tomatoes and peppers. Wherever room can be found, there are old clay pots filled with geraniums and clivias. These greenhouses are emphatically not spaces for living, in the manner of modern conservatories. They are forcing houses, larders, growing places, though they provide welcome shelter in winter and early spring when gardeners can loiter, sowing seeds and dreaming of harvests to come.

Although the traditional kitchen garden is primarily a place to produce food, flowers are rarely banished entirely. Often there are box-

edged beds running under the walls for picking borders of roses, larkspur, scabious and everlasting flowers such as statice and helichrysum. Thick plantings of tulips provide colour and flowers to cut for the house earlier in the year.

Sometimes a wide central path is arched over with apples or pears grown as cordons or espaliers, with wide herbaceous borders planted in great swathes under them. Sometimes there are swags of rambling roses strung along rope fixed to posts alongside a path, with thick ribbons of sweet-smelling pinks underneath.

Garbed fruit trees, usually trained as cordons, espaliers or fans, are a feature of most old kitchen gardens. They make living screens round vegetable plots with their outstretched, lichen-covered branches. Once the framework is securely established, they are easy to prune to shape each summer. Fan-trained greengages, peaches and apricots get the warmest walls.

Crops may be sown according to a traditional rotation: with members of the onion family in one big plot, brassicas in another, legumes in a third and potatoes together with other root vegetables in the fourth. But some gardeners feel there are disadvantages in grouping similar crops together, as they tend to pass diseases from one to the other more easily.

Climbing peas and beans are occasionally grown over bowered seats, or trained up hazel poles that have been bowed over to make a tunnel down a central path. If you want to copy this idea, use only freshly cut "green" hazel, which will bend smoothly without snapping. To span

a 4ft path, you will need three poles to make a single arch, one pole stuck either side of the path, the third lashed to them at either end to arch over the top. When all the hoops are in place, you can connect them lengthways with more hazel poles laid horizontally. This makes a very strong, firm structure.

Because running a traditional walled kitchen garden is rather like mulching with £5 notes, they are much thinner on the ground than they used to be. Even the National Trust, with its pockets full of splendid country houses, has not run a proper, working kitchen garden at any of them. Instead, walled gardens have been turned into car-parks and picnic areas.

The Trust decided it wanted to fill this obvious gap and drew up a short list of properties where they might restore a kitchen garden. Clumber Park, Nottinghamshire, was one possibility; 28 gardeners once worked in the seven-acre kitchen garden there. A good kitchen garden also existed until the fifties at Attingham Park in Shropshire, while at Tanton Park in Cheshire there was probably the Trust's best collection of greenhouses, frames and fruit pits.

In the end, Benington Hall, just north of York, was the chosen site, thanks to a generous bequest, which meant that an extra gardener could be taken on there to work solely in the kitchen garden. This lies to the east of the house and covers at least an acre and a half, bounded by brick walls, in places up to 13ft high. Work started in earnest in the autumn and, already, head gardener John Thallon and his team have

laid out wide paths, planted nearly 3,000 box bushes to edge the beds, and dug out the old dipping pond at the centre of the garden.

"It was about 35ft deep, 18th-century, but was filled in just before the Trust took over the property when Lady Chesterfield's dog fell in it and drowned," explained Mr Thallon, who has spent 17 years at Benington, the last four of them as head gardener. The pond sits half-way along the handsome tunnel of eight different sorts of pear which runs across the centre of the garden. The trees are more than a hundred years old, but spurs are still sprouting vigorously.

The pear tunnel and the vines in the newly restored lean-to greenhouse are the only features that remain from the kitchen garden as it was in its heyday. The vines, 'Foster's Seedling' and 'Lady Downe's Seedling' were both raised by Thomas Foster, head gardener at Benington for nearly 40 years from 1827. Fruit, vegetables and dahlias were his specialties and he raised the vines in 1835 by crossing 'Black Morocco' with 'White Sweetwater'. His own seedling produced an early white grape, 'Lady Downe's Seedling' is black and fruits late.

The National Trust's plan for Benington shows long herbaceous borders under the pear tunnel, fan-trained cherries and plums on one wall, fan-trained pears and quince on another and two lean-to potting sheds built against the north wall, with borders of soft fruit in between. Long hedges of lavender sweep down the paths to the east and west and there are beds of rhubarb, asparagus, globe artichokes and –

in Foster's memory – dahlias. There will also be big cutting borders of annual flowers.

The soil, says John Thallon, is amazingly good and you can tell by the mountainous size of his muck and compost heaps that he intends to keep it that way. Restoration work on the brick walls has been going on steadily for years and is now complete. The south-facing wall is hollow, and was once heated by 17 fires, each with a flue and chimney pot sticking out of the top of the wall. Interconnecting pipes provided heat to protect early-flowering peaches and nectarines against frost and to extend the ripening period.

These have not been restored, though Mr Thallon has saved some of the exceptionally long thin bricks that were used to bridge over the flues. One of the 13 gardeners that still worked at Benington in Lady Chesterfield's day told him how they used to shovel hot ashes from the greenhouse boiler into the two flues that still remained. The rest had already been bricked up.

For £30 you can donate a fan-trained peach or fig for Benington's kitchen garden; £25 would buy a cherry or plum; £20 a 6ft length of lavender hedge; £10 a Muscat grape vine. Donations can be sent to the Property Manager at Benington Hall, Shipton by Benington, York YO6 1DD (01904 470666). The garden will be open from 30 March, Sat-Wed (11am-5pm); admission £3 (£4.50 includes admission to house).



CUTTINGS

The Royal Horticultural Society will be holding the first flower show of its calendar this Tuesday and Wednesday at the Royal Horticultural Halls, Vincent Square, London SW1. Look for hellebores, snowdrops and aconites (which have been blooming in my garden for the past two weeks). Competitions are

held at all the RHS's Westminster shows. This week, ornamental plants vie for the judges' attention. The show is open Tues (11am-7pm), admission £5, and Weds (10am-5pm), £3.

An SOS call came this week from a student at Edinburgh, returning to her flat after the holidays. Her weeping fig (Ficus benjamina) was shedding its clothing faster than the Chippendales. What should she do? The fig in question often does lose leaves in winter. As it is one of the leafiest of indoor plants, this does not necessarily leave it looking bare. Leaf loss is made

worse, though, if the plant does not have enough light. If this student's waking hours match those of our tribe, I would guess the curtains in her room probably aren't drawn back much before midday, and it is dark by 4pm. More light (but not direct sunlight) may help. In winter the plant should not need much water, but the three-week break may have made it sulk. Water, if the compost is dry, adding in some liquid feed. Mistling over the leaves is useful during the winter. It keeps the atmosphere immediately round the plant humid, which it likes, without drowning the roots.

It may be winter for us, but it is high summer for orchids, and growers are tempting would-be buyers into their nurseries

By Clare Stewart

In the depths of winter when the average gardener is kept indoors feeding off glossy gardening books and planning over-ambitious borders for the summer, orchid enthusiasts are feeling snug.

This is high summer for a good number of popular species. Visit an orchid nursery now and be dazzled by the diverse charms of Phalenopsis, Cymbidium and Odonoglossum – each species spawning thousands of hybrids to send orchid enthusiasts into a flutter.

But however beautiful, orchids do have a PR problem, as their film star reputations for being expensive and difficult to handle can discourage would-be growers.

This is a misconception that orchid nurseries are keen to squash. Many top growers are now offering special events and advice days to help overcome orchid inhibitions, as well as to show off their collections.

"Nurseries have to go out of their way because of the myths that surround orchid growing," says Sara Ritter, shrewd of top growers Burnham Nurseries in Newton Abbot, Devon.

The nursery offers free orchid workshops every month. "We have free orchid workshops every month for beginners regular attenders who keep coming back because there is always something different to learn."

On 18 February, for example, Burnham is running a Getting Growing workshop, and on 17 March, a Repotting workshop.

Another medal-winning nursery, McBean's Orchids near Lewes in Sussex, is busy with special events. It has two open weekends planned, on

the 27-28 January, and in February on 24 and 25.

February is a particularly good time to visit McBean's, because of the range of popular orchids, such as the Cymbidium, which can be seen there. These cool growing plants flower from September through to May, lasting up to two months or more in flower depending on the number of flower spikes.

"One of the commonest questions we get is how to get a Cymbidium to reflower the following year," says Liz Johnson. "It is often a matter of the temperature being too warm. We also recommend that the plants go outside in the summer to get more light and to ensure that they get the differential between the day and night temperature which is important."

Another orchid frequently recommended for beginners is the Phalenopsis, or moth orchid. These are the most popular as house plants,

because they like heat and can cope with drier atmosphere of centrally heated houses.

"They are also the best for beginners because they flower more than once," says Alan Long, from long established growers Mansell & Hatcher in Leeds. "The first flowers can last up to 12 weeks, and then the plant can reflower within three to four months."

Mansell & Hatcher, which offers a range of orchids, but particularly specialises in cool growing Odonoglossum, also runs open weekends with the next on February 9-10, and on 24-25 February, where potting and "sorting out sick plants" will be among the topics.

While a serious passion for orchids can become rather like train spotting for the wealthy, it is also an interest for more modest budgets.

Expect to pay from between £10-£15 for an orchid that is near flowering, less for younger plants. Many specialists offer collections for



Phalenopsis: one of the easiest to grow BBC Books

such as at Kew, Glasgow and Wisley and on Jersey, the Eric Young Foundation.

A valuable source of information on local orchid societies, nurseries and events is the Orchid Society, which publishes its own magazine and where annual membership costs £10 with a £5 joining fee. And once you are truly launched as an orchid enthusiast, don't forget the RHS Orchid Review, published six times a year with a subscription cost of £24.95.

Burnham Nurseries: 01626 52233; McBeans: 01273 400228; Mansell & Hatcher: 0113 2502016; The Orchid Society (secretary Mrs Betty Arnold): 01483 421423; The Orchid Review: 01303 813803; RHS 0171-834 4333; The Eric Young Orchid Foundation: 01534 861963

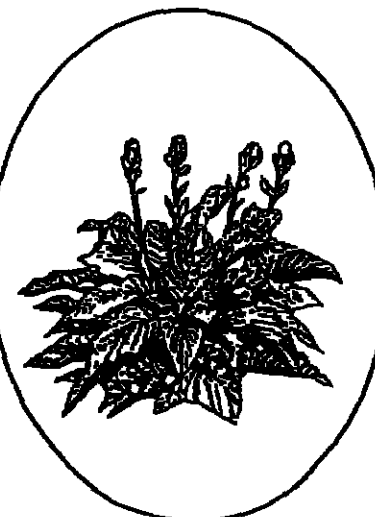
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Now you see him, one day you won't

By the year 2015 the water vole may have entirely disappeared from the riverbanks of the Thames. By Trevor Lawson

Just before Christmas, a report for the Government recommended that "Ratty", the water vole made famous by his starring role in *The Wind in the Willows*, should be made a priority species for conservation. Although the authors of the report – the UK Biodiversity Strategy – suspected that something was seriously wrong along the river bank, they underestimated the scale of the disaster. New research, to be published later this year, has found that voles may become extinct in the River Thames and its tributaries in fewer than 20 years. Similar rates of decline are predicted for many other parts of Britain, and this month an urgent, nationwide investigation gets under way to save one of Britain's best loved mammals.

Water voles have been in decline for decades. The UK Biodiversity Strategy announced that "a national survey in 1989-90 failed to find signs of voles in 67 per cent of sites where they were previously recorded". Nobody was certain of the cause of the decline because, as the strategy noted, the vole's previously common status had meant that no one had been very interested in studying it.

But last year one of Oxford University's leading zoologists, Dr David Macdonald, went looking for water voles in the River Thames catchment with Rob Strachan (who worked on the 1989-90 survey) and his student Guillermo Barreto. Looking in detail at 140 riverbank sites, they found that the number occupied by voles had fallen from 73 per cent in 1990, to just 24 per cent in 1995. Given this staggering rate of decline, the research team now estimate that the Thames's water voles could be extinct by 2015.

As they looked for voles, the research team also looked for signs of North American mink, which escaped from fur farms in the 1940s and 1950s and is now firmly established in Britain. People have been quick to blame this dark predator for putting the gentlemanly Ratty to death. As expected, Macdonald's team found strong evidence which implicated the mink.

For a start, although sites without mink did have water voles every site with mink had no voles at all. In addition, although the number of sites occupied by voles had been decreasing at the rate of just over two per year over the 35 years to 1990, the losses accelerated to almost 13 sites per year between 1990 and 1995, where mink are known to have increased their range. Where mink populated an area at the start of the year, voles were found to be locally extinct by October.

Despite their alarming findings, the Oxford scientists have not demanded the mink's eradication. They believe that eradication is impossible anyway, but they were also aware that the water vole had started to decline before

All you need to know about water voles

Latin name: *Arvicola terrestris*
Distribution: Throughout Europe, but the British form is unique in its fondness for rivers.

Size: Bigger than a domestic hamster, smaller than a brown rat, about 13 inches from nose to tail.

Home: In winter, a tunnel in the riverbank, in a nest of chewed grasses and reeds. In summer, a ball-like nest in the reeds.

Threats: Mink, otters, polecats, foxes, birds of prey. Also floods, which may drown them in their burrows. And of course man, whose eagerness to tidy up river banks destroys their habitat. Do they have webbed feet? No, nor do they have flatish tails, like otters or beavers. In fact, they're not really adapted to water at all. Their oily fur helps, but if they stay in water for too long, they can become waterlogged. Why do we never see them? Because they mainly come out at dawn and dusk, and are otherwise travelling around in the riverbank vegetation. Anglers see them quite often though.

the mink arrived in Britain. So they investigated further, tracking the ecological history of the Thames sites back through to the 1950s, when mink were barely a fur ball on the English landscape.

They found more positive links, not between voles and mink, but between voles and milk production. Woolly jumpers, and barbed wire. Voles were present at only four of the 40 sites intensively grazed by cows and sheep, but at 27 of the 90 sites which had no grazing, a significantly different statistic emerged. Vole decline was also linked to the removal of hedgerows (which have been increasingly replaced with wire fences) and the drainage of wetland.

So, while Macdonald admits that mink-infested habitats are "mortality sinks" into which straying voles quickly disappear, he argues that to blame the mink for the extinction of voles is to confuse the messenger with the message. The root causes of their demise are the riverside agricultural changes which have confined voles to narrow strips of "tightrope" habitat. Precariously balanced therein, they have been easily nudged out by mink, but also by flooding and drought. "The mink might pull the trigger," says Macdonald, "but they did not cock the pistol."

This month Macdonald's team is extending its research nationwide, in the hope of correlating its findings and discovering whether anything can really be done to give the water vole a fighting chance. "Our hope is to find what kind of riverine habitat configuration

is suitable for the farming community, but allows the water vole to live in conjunction with mink," says Macdonald.

Evidence shows that water voles and minks have shared Stodmarsh in Kent and the Tregaron Bog on the Upper Teifi river in Wales for 20 years. In Belarus, in eastern Europe, water voles survive alongside American mink and European mink, as well as otters and polecats. In these places, Macdonald suspects that grassy, well-layered vegetation, extending perhaps tens of yards from the river's edge, allows voles to live in greater densities than the narrow tightrope of habitat which now borders so many British rivers. He says that while living in greater numbers will not spare the voles from mink attacks, the population will be better able to withstand the higher mortality rates which result. In short, voles will only find safety in numbers.

While urgent research to find the right habitat balance gets going, the gradual return of otters and polecats across England and Wales raises other issues for the study team. Otters and polecats were intensively persecuted and eliminated from many areas long before water vole records were kept. So, zoologists are wondering whether the numbers of voles which we think we have lost to the mink was actually artificially high in the first place. Macdonald admits that he does not know what the "natural" density of voles in a riverside habitat with otters and other predators should be.

The team is also wondering whether the return of otters and polecats will dent the mink population by competing with it, and so help the vole. Macdonald, trying to maintain an air of optimism, hopes that it will. "It is likely that the recovery of the bigger and heavier otter will drive mink numbers down. And mink diets contain a higher proportion of water voles than those of polecats or otters, so their return should have a lesser impact on voles than the mink. But on the other hand, otters and polecats might not make the voles better off at all, because they are already in such a bad state," he admits.

But whether or not comes to Ratty's rescue or not, the water vole's survival will ultimately depend on the co-operation of the landowners who have already contributed to its demise. The National Rivers Authority is funding the research, and Alistair Driver – the NRA's project manager – says: "The primary objective will be to influence river management practices so that conservation efforts get under way soon in selected areas. If we can revert some of those intensively used river margins to low intensity grazing, or whatever else we find will help the water vole, it might just have a chance."



Arvicola terrestris is vanishing from our river banks. Is it the fault of mink, or man?

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Copenhagen:
start here

Copenhagen, Europe's Capital of Culture in 1996, is displaying more flair and energy than any host since Glasgow in 1990. Whoever coined the phrase "wonderful Copenhagen" was probably not thinking of the city's artistic track record. In the brief twilight that passes for daytime in January, the city can look fetching, but a nation that envies Sweden for its success in pop music needs to think big when taking on a continent's calendar of culture. So decrepit buildings are being rejuvenated as rapidly as new ones are rising from the frozen earth. Concerts are to be staged in a dry-dock of a newly liberated military base, plays will be performed in a cavernous former torpedo shed, and an electronic café installed in a submarine factory is already up and running. Final bribe: air fares to the Danish capital have just become very financially pleasing.



Amagertorv square: newly renovated for Copenhagen's year of culture

The big chill

A survival guide to Europe's Capital of Culture in 1996. By Simon Calder

What to see

Much of Copenhagen's cultural offerings are still under wraps – or scaffolding. The following are open for business right now.

The "Nordic Masterpieces" exhibition opened at the new Society of Arts gallery (Kunstforeningen) on the waterfront last weekend. If the only Scandinavian artist you know is Edvard Munch, you may be pleased to learn that a whole room is devoted to his work. When you see some of the other exhibits, you may not be surprised that Nordic art is relatively little-known outside the region. But enjoy the venue, gently transformed from a lawyers' office to a gallery, and the views from the windows across the water. Open 10am-5pm daily except Monday. Buy a 40kr (£5) joint ticket to take in the Photographic Centre.

On the same premises, the Photographic Centre features some of the more obscure works by Man Ray. The American photographer used to make his own Christmas cards, and examples from the mid-Thirties are in the collection alongside more surreal work. The centre is packed out with a series of postcard-size historic snapshots of Copenhagen, notably one showing the quay-side in the days when it was a flourishing fish market.

For more of the city's past see the Workers' Museum (mentioned opposite), open the shortest hours of any in Copenhagen: Tuesday to Friday 10am-3pm, Saturday and Sunday 11am-4pm, closed Monday. Admission 15kr (£2).

The culturally active, mean-

while, could climb the Round Tower, open 10am-5pm daily except Sunday (noon-4pm). The present photographic exhibition there continues until 25 February. Admission 30kr (£4).

Where to eat

Copenhagen has some fine restaurants, which charge spectacular prices. Thankfully, however, all-inclusive deals abound in Copenhagen. An entire day's menu can cost as little as £44, and should set most people up for a week. Here's how. (Vegetarians, however, are mostly in for a dismal time – particularly if they do not eat fish.)

For breakfast head for The Palace Hotel, almost brushing against the City Hall at the crossroads of Copenhagen. The buffet in the Brasserie on the Square costs 98kr (£12) and allows you to eat solidly from 7am to 10.30am. The venue is pure Scandinavia, with superb views of the crowds shivering past outside. After your meal, sneak up in the lift to the fifth floor for a secret view of a neat, Nordic quadrangle.

Those of swift metabolism might be in need of Eleveners later in the day and should make for X Café, on the ground floor of the Illum store, Stroget. Between 10am and noon (9am-11am on Saturdays), you get a decent coffee, a glass of orange juice and a wienerbrod (Danish pastry) for 20kr (£1.50). Your street-level view, meanwhile, is of the main pedestrian thoroughfare. The post-prandial lift ride this time is in a glass elevator, which takes you up to the fourth floor of this elegant department store and reveals a marble

atrium that transcends mere retailing.

At lunchtime wander over to Restaurant Puk, Longgangstræde. At most restaurants in the city centre, you would be lucky to get a main course for 69kr (£8.50), let alone the four-course spread you tack into here. Lunching at Puk seems a bit like eating in a library, because of the heavy old books that insulate it from the outside world. Herring of the day (a typical promise in Copenhagen) is followed by more fish, accompanied by remoulade – a kind of curried mayonnaise. The main course is roast pork with cabbage, and the meal is rounded off by fruit and brie.

Take afternoon tea at Restaurant Wimbled, in the Hotel d'Angleterre at the opposite end of Stroget, the main street, from City Hall Square. In what is probably the bluest restaurant in Copenhagen, Ultramarine Danish decor is interlarded with Japanese. The tables overlooking the square are candlelit, a useful touch given the January darkness that descends almost as soon as lunch is over. Your 58kr (£7) buys a place by the window plus unlimited tea and cakes.

The Danish State Railways Bistro, Central Station, might not seem the most promising place for dinner, particularly if you are the sort of person who gave up on railway catering when BR sandwiches went metric. But do not allow preconceptions to mute your appetite. The Bistro is an airy, well-turned out refuge from the station bustle, and offers the most generous buffet spread in the city. Alongside industrial quan-

ties of herring in various guises, you find heavenly gravadlax and cosmic cheese for the unastronomical price of 98kr (£12).

Finally, a nightcap: Bananenrepublik, Norrebro. The northwest fringe of the inner city comes alive each evening with this trendy café at the social and geographic centre of Norrebro. A cappuccino enlivened with shot of paere Dansk (pear liqueur) will set you back 25kr (£3). And if you still have the munchies, a special "night menu" is served until 4am on Friday and Saturdays.

How to get there

The air fare between Gatwick and Copenhagen has just been cut to £133 by the Danish airline Maersk Air (0171-333 0066): to qualify, you must book a week in advance and travel out on the morning flight, Monday-Friday. A less restrictive ticket costing £136 is sold by the Brazilian airline Varig (0171-629 5824) for its flights from Heathrow. British Airways (0345 222111) and SAS (0345 010789) are likely to match these fares on flights from Heathrow and Gatwick. BA also offers services from Birmingham for £182 return, and SAS from Manchester for £183. Air UK (0345 666777) has a fare of £162 from Stansted. British Midland (0345 554554) flies from both Glasgow and Edinburgh to Copenhagen for £193. For all these fares, you must stay away a Saturday night.

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By Simon Calder

Probably the best storyteller in the world: a statue of Hans Christian Andersen looks out over Copenhagen. Photography: Simon Udoen

The Carlsberg tour is free; just turn up at the brewery at 11am or 2pm from Monday to Friday.

These new goggles have no clip, so at least that's one form of failure ruled out even if they are more awkward to put on without disturbing my carefully arranged head insulation. But I note a warning on the box that the lenses are not designed to withstand impact – so I'll have to be careful not to bang my head against too many glaciers, or brick walls.

In the northern French Alps, where this report is being prepared, the valleys are depressingly green and spring-like; some of the lower runs are extremely icy and one or two of the directly south-facing ones are bare. But higher up there is good skiing to be had in resorts with enough snow to ride out the mild spell. The runs above Avoriaz, for example, have been very enjoyable.

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









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Wanted: adventurous, ambitious travel plans

Award-winning travel writer William Dalrymple explains how you can win £25,000 for the trip of a lifetime

On his journey to Oxiana in the mid-1930s, Robert Byron – arguably one of the greatest travel writers of this century – dreamt of setting up a prize for the observant and innovative independent traveller. "I wish I were rich enough to endow a prize for the sensible traveller", he wrote in his diary in May 1934 while sitting in a caravanserai in central Afghanistan. "I would give £10,000 for the first man to cover Marco Polo's outward route reading three fresh books a week, and another £10,000 if he drinks a bottle of wine a day as well."

Torpedoed in 1942, Robert Byron was never able to set up his prize, but I like to think that he would recognise the Heineken Export/Independent prize as the modern equivalent of the sort of scheme he was planning. Unlike Robert Byron's scheme, we are not demanding that people read three books a week, nor even that they drink a can of Heineken Export every day. What we are looking for is the most original, best planned, most ambitious and adventurous travel idea from someone aged between 18 and 35 that comes before me and my fellow judges: Simon Calder, Jennifer Cox of Lonely Planet, Sarah Garland of STA Travel and Richard Evans of Heineken.

The "Wildest Dream" prize is £5,000 more than Byron envisaged – we've got £25,000 to give away – and the judges are reserving the right to distribute it as we see fit. We may give it all to one breathtaking dream; we may divide it between five or six front-runners. One way or another this is a very exciting opportunity for the hundreds of potential independent travellers out there who have long dreamt of making some grand trip to the farthest-flung parts of the globe. Few people have the resources to go where they really want and this award is a rare chance for someone, or a group of people, to realise some exceptionally ambitious dream.

I am particularly happy to be part of this as my own career as a traveller was kick-started by a travel award: it was a £750 prize from my university that set me off in the footsteps of Marco Polo to Xanadu, and resulted in the most wonderful three and a half months of my entire life. As any true traveller knows, there really is no greater pleasure in this life than your first long-distance trip.

One man who really knew this was one of my great heroes, Tom Coryat. He was Shakespeare's contemporary and had, as he put it, "had an insatiable greediness of seeing strange countries, which exercise is indeed the queen of all pleasures in the world". In an effort to satisfy this love of travel he set off from Odcombe in Somerset – and walked to India. He "traced all this tedious way afoot with no small toyle of body and discomfort living compentle for a penny sterling a day" and arrived in Delhi to find

that he had run out of money. He made a small begging speech before the Moghul Emperor: "Lord Protector of the World, all hail to you", he said. "I am a poore traveller and world-seer, which am come from a farre country, namely England, queene of all the ilands in the world..." Sadly, Coryat was so tattered and unkempt by this stage, that the emperor thought he was a sadhu (a holy man who had deliberately renounced wealth) and gave him only 10 rupees. Destitute, he spent the money on "a surfeit of sack" and died of dysentery soon after. If only this prize had been set up just a little earlier, Coryat might have returned home to write his book, *Drake and Raleigh* might never have had to turn to piracy to fund their expeditions, and the whole history of the Englishman abroad might have been very different.



William Dalrymple in the map room of the Royal Geographical Society

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

The Wildest Dreams Travel Challenge

Who can enter: Anyone aged between 18 and 35.
How to enter: Fill out an application form giving details of your travel plans. These will be assessed by a panel of experts and a shortlist of applicants will be interviewed. Forms are available through a special hotline number 0171-231 5432, the Lonely Planet Internet <http://www.lonelyplanet.com.au>, at STA Travel or at Independent Traveller's World fairs.
When to enter: By 26 April 1996. Winners will be announced on 6 May. If you're planning to leave before then, don't despair, we will be making interim awards. How much is the prize? The total bursary is £25,000 and the amount awarded to winners is at the judges' discretion. It is possible that one exceptional proposal (say a tour of the 177 countries where Heineken Export is available) could win the full amount...



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Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto

The landscape with all its variety, curves and contours, spikes and steepness is sensationally and subtly captured by your artists. Wow, Canada is an amazing place.
– Sharon T, England

These flowers are familiar, yet unfamiliar. I wonder about the world they grew in 300 years ago.
– Patricia K, Oakville

I like the pictures, but I like the sculptures more. My favourite sculptures are the Henry Moore sculptures.
– Brian F, aged 10. (The gallery has the world's largest collection of Henry Moore sculptures)

When I look at one of my sculptures, I think it's like going on a journey; each time you return, you see something different – Henry Moore.

Bargain of the week

National Express (0990 010104) has come up with a deal for the over 50s. Anyone born in 1945 or earlier now qualifies for a discount coachcard, offering around one-third off the cost of most long-distance bus journeys. Better still, until 15 February older travellers can make a return journey anywhere in Britain for £6.99. The offer excludes Fridays and Sundays, but if you avoid these dates then you save £78 on the Penzance-Inverness run. When a similar offer ran last year, one customer travelled 5,500 miles during the promotion.

Trouble spots

This week's advice from our man in the Foreign Office

Chechen Republic: "The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs advises that the Russian Federation can no longer guarantee the personal safety of foreign nationals in the Chechen Republic. Travellers are strongly advised not to enter this region."

Costa Rica: "Do not wear jewellery or carry large amounts of cash, especially in the centre of San Jose, where gang muggings can occur even in daylight in busy streets."

Croatia: "Avoid travel to Eastern Slavonia (UN Sector East). Travellers should exercise caution in areas

bordering Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro, including the Prevlaka peninsula."

Lebanon: "Travel is inadvisable in south Lebanon beyond the city of Sidon because of continued shelling and paramilitary activity from the coast to the southern Bekaa Valley. Visitors are encouraged to register with the British Embassy in Beirut upon arrival (417007)."

Foreign Office travel advice is available on 0171-270 4129; on BBC-2 Ceefax page 564 onwards; and on the Internet at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>

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UK Travel

At home with the Cofan Indians

Mark Mann journeys into the Ecuadorean rainforest

We were looking for adventure but left with a sense of life's fragility. It was not quite what we had expected. We had come to Ecuador to explore the rainforest and live among Indians - Cofan Indians from the village of Dureno in the north. To get there from Quito, Ecuador's capital, you take an overnight bus - a battered crate packed with stoical, moon-faced Indian peasants, chickens peering forlornly through holes in cardboard boxes, piglets curled up in baskets.

Mountains and pastures give way to tropical plantations as the bus twists down the endless slopes of the Andes, and when dawn breaks, it is over lush jungle, the early-morning air already heavy with a humidity. The bus stops at Lago Agrio - a hot, dusty, booming frontier town built 20 years ago solely because of oil exploration.

There, an Indian boy agreed to show us to Dureno if we paid his bus fare. We got off in the middle of nowhere and walked through the jungle to a fast-flowing river. Much shouting attracted the ferry - a man in a dug-out canoe.

The ferry man was Laureno. Short and plump, with a soft manner and a pudding-bowl haircut, he was to be our guide. He was dressed, like everyone else, in T-shirt, rubber boots and football shorts, but unlike most Cofans, he spoke some Spanish.

Laureno and his friend Delfin led us into the forest beyond the village, hacking away with machetes at the curtain of branches that had grown across the path in the fortnight since it was last used. After two hours, we reached a raised wooden platform in a

clearing, where we spent the next four nights and days.

Delfin and Laureno had devised a programme. They showed us trees 40 metres tall, hollow trees wide enough to sleep inside, and parasitic trees that grew around other trees, eventually strangling their host. We swung Tarzan-like, from gigantic hanging vines and swam in warm muddy streams. We learnt to fish with spears, weave giant leaves into instant shelters and fire darts from a blow-pipe. We saw how plants provide the Cofans with food, medicine, tools, fire, and materials for weaving, building and clothing.

I asked Laureno if he ever got lost in this endless maze of trees. "Yes. Sometimes. But I will always come to a tree that I know." Inside the forest, landscape disappears; there are no open views, no horizons. Trees and plants become the whole world.

Spider monkeys swung overhead. Electric blue butterflies flitted by. Shafts of sunlight filtered through the forest's leafy ceiling into its surprisingly cool, shady interior, like beams illuminating a Gothic cathedral. Ants nests as big as cars sent out giant tentacles of busy workers, insect motorways cutting through the tangled debris of fallen trees and plants.

At night, after meals of fresh fish, bananas and rice, we lay under mosquito nets, surrounded by the hum of insects and strange bird calls. One sounded disconcertingly like a telephone ringing. Another made a hollow, fluid sound like a pebble dropping into water.

We visited the tree where the last spiritual guide, or shaman, of the village used to sit alone for days, eating nothing except an emetic tree bark.

Only when he felt suitably cleansed would he delve into the rainforest's natural pharmacy of mind-altering plants.

Delfin said he had been mistakenly shot by a hunter while transformed into a tiger. His job was now vacant. A few village youths were keen on the drugs a shaman deals with, he explained, but the requisite celibacy and throwing up put off applicants.



Under threat: Cofan Indians in the booming oil town of Lago Agrio

Photograph: South American Pictures

We paid about £60 each for our time in the rainforest. Other tours can cost 10 times that, often with nothing going to the Indians themselves. Our trip was unusual in that it was run directly by the Cofans. Too often, Indians are treated as just another exotic exhibit to gawp at, and one tribe, the Maorani, have formally announced that they don't wish to be visited by tourists at all.

The Cofans - once numbering tens of thousands, but now only a few hundred-strong - migrated here from the highlands to escape the Spanish invaders. Now modern conquistadors, thirsty for oil rather than gold, have caught up with them, and there is nowhere left to run. Tourism may prove to be just another factor in the destruction of their culture. But, just possibly, it may help them survive.

How to get to Ecuador

The best London-Quito fare from Journey Latin America (0181-747 3108) is £446 inc tax on Venezuelan airline Viasa via Caracas; the fare is valid until 29 Feb. Quito airport is near the city centre and a cheap cab ride from the central bus station.

Further information

South American Explorers Club, Toledo 1254, La Floresta, Quito (566 076).

Free Freeze competition: the results

This has involved many hours on the Internet, avoiding peeling Brussels sprouts. Judy Griffiths of West Yorkshire was one of hundreds of people who spent Christmas tackling our annual travel competition. Sadly, she was not among the lucky winners drawn from the Independent's Panama hat. Neither was Roy Williams of Hertfordshire, even though he supplied the helpful addendum that North America's tallest mountain was once known by the Russian name Bolshaya Gora ("big mountain"). P J Vokes of Tyne & Wear offered four other options. The acceptable answers were:

1. Iceland
2. Glasgow
3. Saskatchewan
4. Mull of Kintyre
5. Nova Scotia
6. Edinburgh Castle
7. Berwick
8. Malin or Clyde; all but the former are Scottish firths, all but the latter are sea areas.
9. Muckle Flugga
10. Copenhagen
11. Finland
12. Copenhagen
13. Spitzbergen
14. Denmark
15. Calgary
16. Baffin Island
17. Mount McKinley, Denali (both required)
18. Valdez
19. North West Territories
20. Ice Station
21. Greenland
22. South Ruislip
23. North Riding
24. Yap
25. Southwold, although Southend was also allowed if the village in Argyll or Strathclyde was identified.

The winners

First prize goes to Miss K A Smith of Coventry, who wins a long weekend for two in Iceland courtesy of Arctic Experience. Chris Watkins of Derby wins second prize of a short break in Shetland, courtesy of Business Air, Shetland Islands Tourist Board and Busta House Hotel. And in third place, Mark Bolton of Manchester can start planning his trip to Russia with the *Siberian BAM Railway Guide*, published by Trailblazer. Our congratulations to the winners, and commiserations to the other entrants. The quiz this coming Christmas may lead to a trip somewhere a little warmer.



SIMON CALDER

You probably don't go to airports to eat, so Egon Ronay picked a soft target this month when he laded vitriol on their restaurants. On France's leading airport, he says: "Food at Charles de Gaulle is for people who have damaged their palates in some way."

As has been widely reported, Mr Ronay found Heathrow airport way ahead of Continental competition: "The gen-

eral standard, although it needs constant monitoring, is increasing all the time."

What was not mentioned is that for four years, Egon Ronay has been paid by Heathrow - he and the airport declined to tell me how much - for precisely what Mr Ronay says must continue: monitoring Heathrow catering standards.

Mr Ronay has done much to raise standards of mass catering, and is perfectly entitled to criticise every airport apart from the one paying him. But if he believes Charles de Gaulle airport is beyond redemption, he should check out the Felix Potin supermarket in the basement of Terminal 1, where he will find the makings of an excellent airport picnic.

A Northwest Airlines flight from Gatwick to Minneapolis flew into turbulence last month when a party of 18 travellers let Christmas spirit get the better of them. According to the airline, they started throwing food at cabin crew, who then refused to serve them alcohol. Parents deployed their children to steal liquor, and a fracas started. Upon arrival, one passenger was detained and the rest were denied entry to the US and put on the next plane home.

A Surrey discount agency, Media Travel, has taken up the theme in a brochure of cut-

price tickets. The fares are good, but the small print is alarming. In terms and conditions, passengers are advised that "All flights [sic] must take place between 8 January and 28 March".

This year is unusual in that no total solar eclipse will take place (unless things go astronomically wrong). Instead, a last word on the eclipse in the summer of 1927. Robert Walker of north London writes with an elegant post-script to the story of the year when the last total eclipse took place in Britain.

Trains were run to Yorkshire for the event, and carried some illustrious passengers. "Now the colour was going out. Down in the Valley it was an extraordinary scramble of red & black... suddenly the light went out. We had fallen. It was extinct. There was no colour. The earth was dead. This was the astonishing moment: & the next when as if a ball had rebounded, the cloud took colour on itself again... They came back astonishingly lightly & quickly & beautifully in the valley & over the hills."

The female author's identity can be discerned from a clue elsewhere in the account: "This is Hatfield, I daresay," I said. I was smoking a cigar. The writer was Virginia Woolf, and the story appears in volume III of her diaries.

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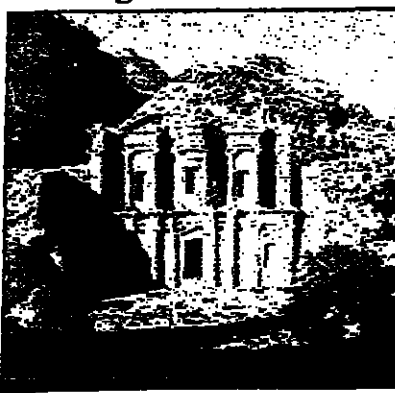
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Our arrangement includes the international flight to and from Damascus, visits to Palmyra, Damascus, Bosra, and Petra, seven nights accommodation, transportation throughout, and services of local knowledgeable guides and a variety of optional visits to Crac des Chevaliers, Jerash, Little Petra, and Wadi Rum.

This is a wonderful opportunity to visit both Syria and Jordan, two of the world's most fascinating countries. We reach Damascus in the evening where we spend three nights at the al-Paradis Hotel. From here we make our visit to Palmyra with the choice of other optional visits including an exploration of the Old City of Damascus, best done on foot, and perhaps a visit to the Street called Straight.

Then travel onwards overland to Petra for three nights' stay at the Petra Guest House situated at the very gates of the site itself. During our stay optional visits may be made to the site of Petra, best made over two days followed perhaps

by excursions to Little Petra, Jerash, and Wadi Rum. Finally, our last night is spent in the town of Bosra where we explore the perfectly preserved Roman amphitheatre before returning to Damascus for the flight to London Gatwick.

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Professional moves:
David McEwan outside his new home near Leeds
Photograph: Justin Slee/Guzzellian

Where there are lawyers, accountants and money men, there are house price rises. By Anne Spackman

Anyone seeking the property hot spots of 1996 should feel their divining rods twitch at places with high concentrations of banks, building societies and insurance companies. It used to be that where there was muck there was brass; now the brass itself seems to be self-perpetuating. Nowhere does the phrase apply better than Leeds. Though Leeds has always had a strong commercial sector it has now grown to become England's second city for financial services and the lawyers and accountants they spawn. The effect has been to cushion the city against the worst falls in house prices and to increase demand for the most desirable properties.

Similarly Edinburgh - where nearly a fifth of the population is employed in the financial sector - saw the largest house price rises anywhere in Britain in 1995. Prices in the city centre were up 15 per cent during last year.

The recovery of the central London property market, now into its fourth year, has also been strongly City-driven. Estate

agents are expecting a new flurry of bonus-cheque purchases this year. "By March it will be the bankers and brokers who will be our priority applicants," said James Laing of Strutt & Parker last week.

With job insecurity the major factor holding back the housing market nationwide, it is increasingly those in financial professions who have the confidence to move. Financial companies require a high degree of mobility from their employees. In London this has significantly boosted the lettings market, but in cities such as Edinburgh and Leeds, where property prices start low, job relocation has translated into real house sales. In all cases it means the most popular areas are doing well with no spin-off for the also-rans.

In Edinburgh, home to Scottish Widows, Standard Life and Scottish Equitable as well as the large Scottish banks, this has meant large price rises in the Old and New Towns. George Clark, chairman of the Edinburgh Solicitors Property Centre, says: "The explosion in financial services

has really sustained cities such as Edinburgh. These institutions demand a high degree of mobility from their employees and many of them offer subsidised mortgages. Because house prices have held up in Scotland we haven't had the real dent in people's confidence about whether it is worth buying a house at all. There has been no noticeable growth in the rented sector - partly because house prices start low and partly because we don't have a stock of serviced apartment blocks in the city."

Houses in the elegant New Town are changing hands for between £300,000 and £500,000. A house that Savills advertised with a guide price of £385,000 attracted four serious offers and went to a stockbroker for £465,000.

In Leeds, prices have not risen quite as far and fast as in Edinburgh, but the city is in buoyant mood. Harvey Nichols has chosen Leeds for the opening of its first store outside Knightsbridge this autumn. Coutts & Co has moved to larger premises on Park Square and the merchant

bank Rothschild is joining them round the corner.

The city's growing salaries are finding their way to the wealthy northern suburbs of Leeds and to towns such as Harrogate, Ilkley and Wetherby and the villages in between. Builders such as Redrow, Bryant and Crosby Homes are chasing prime development sites, causing prices to rise to more than £400,000 an acre.

This is the territory of Dacre, Son & Hartley, which has 18 estate agency offices covering the area. David Chary, director of its Ilkley office, said: "In the past year I have sold properties to senior partners in firms of chartered accountants and to senior directors of venture capital organisations and all of them have paid handsome prices. These people have prospered in Leeds in the last five years. As a result, the housing recession has not hit us as hard as other areas. The Halifax Building Society puts average house prices at just over £60,000," Mr Chary went on. "In the golden triangle, the average house price is slightly in excess of £200,000."

The firm is currently selling two attractive period stone five-bedroom houses in Wharfedale, both with asking prices of £395,000. Cluttons's Harrogate office last year sold a five-bedroom manor house in Middleton, Ilkley, with planning permission for two homes in its garden for nearly £1m.

David McEwan knew it would be hard to find a good country cottage when he moved jobs from London to Leeds two months ago. Originally from Harrogate, he knew how popular the area had become. He is paying £70,000 for a two-up, two-down cottage being sold by Cluttons on the Ingley Estate in Ripley and expects to spend another £15,000-£20,000 doing it up.

Mr McEwan, 37, is typical of the kind of professional moving to Leeds. A barrister, he was working as a financier in London, but has moved to Leeds to work as a corporate finance lawyer with Hammond Suddards, one of the city's largest law firms. "I looked at firms in London, Manchester and Leeds," Mr McEwan said. "The message I got from the

headhunters was that these large Leeds practices are perceived as City firms. I've been here eight weeks now and it is the most professional place I have ever worked."

Despite the air of commercial confidence in all these cities, no one is talking up prices and no one is pretending these are boom days. Everywhere agents will say that there are only buyers for houses which are realistically priced.

Even in prosperous north Leeds, estate agents handling the middle to lower end of the market have had a difficult year, but there are signs that the worst may be over. Ben Smith, area manager of Halifax Property Services in north and west Leeds, said the final two months of 1995 had seen a real up-turn. "The browsers became buyers at the end of last year," he said. "We opened between Christmas and New Year and we had plenty of customers. We have already agreed sales in the first weeks of this year at all our offices in north Leeds. The next three to six months will be crucial."

Househunter

Greenwich, London SE10



These two Georgian terraces overlooking the Thames by the Royal Naval College in Greenwich have been knocked into one and turned upside down to create a large and stylish family house. The ground floor of the house on Ballast Quay has four bedrooms, a bathroom, sitting room and laundry, while the first floor contains a continuous sweep of living room, dining room and kitchen. There is a fifth bedroom and second bathroom on the top floor and a south-facing garden at the back. Winkworth is asking £395,000 for the freehold.

For What It's Worth

Demand for homes to rent may increase by up to 60,000 a year according to a new report from Coopers & Lybrand. The report - "Private Renting at the Crossroads" - warns that unless new homes become available, the extra demand is likely to mean rent increases. It says that the collapse in house prices in the early Nineties forced many home owners to become landlords, and persuaded many people that renting was better than buying. The preference for rented accommodation among the young in particular is expected to continue, even if house prices recover enough to allow landlords to sell. The report hopes the shortfall in rented property will be made good by the Housing Investment Trusts, the government's latest vehicles for tax-efficient investment in the rented sector.

Who's Moving

The new occupant of 1 Number 18 Holland Park is Paul Allen, Bill Gates's other half at Microsoft. Mr Allen paid a record £8.5m for the double-fronted white stucco house which has a separate mews and is situated in the road where neighbours include Richard Branson. It was the third most expensive property sale of 1995.

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<h2>WORK, REST AND PLAY</h2>							
<p>QUAYSIDE LIMEHOUSE BASIN</p>		<p>1, 2 & 3 BEDROOM APARTMENTS, QUAYSIDE, LIMEHOUSE BASIN.</p> <p>At Quayside, there's a gym, a fully equipped business centre and some very special apartments, many with balconies overlooking the marina. Features include a 24 hour concierge, video entry phone security, plus all the quality and style you'd expect from St George.</p> <p>All this little more than a mile down river from the City and just 6 minutes on the Docklands Light Railway from Bank.</p> <p>Prices start from just £92,500 to £199,500. The Sales Information Centre is open daily from 10am to 6pm or you can telephone 0171 537 2316.</p> <p><i>Prices correct at time of going to press.</i></p>		<p>ST-GEORGE</p>		<p>A POWERFUL EXAMPLE OF PURE MODERNIST ARCHITECTURE</p> <p>In the heart of Clerkenwell's restaurantland</p> <p>THE WARNER LOFT BUILDING</p> <p>WARNER STREET LONDON EC1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual aspect apartments • Granite tiled balconies • South facing • Clear span space • Diagrid ceiling structure • Secure underground car parking • Prices start at £115,000 subject to contract <p>OPEN: SAT/SUN 12.00 - 3.00 PM CONTACT 0171 713 1543</p> <p>APARTMENTS FROM 750 TO 2800 SQUARE FEET APPROX.</p> <p>FINAL PHASE PRICES FROM £115,000 TO £375,000 (V.A.T.)</p>	
<p>Auctions</p> <p>General Accident Auctions</p> <p>MAJOR PROPERTY AUCTIONS</p> <p>Mainly By Order of the Mortgagees including the Halifax Building Society</p> <p>SOUTHERN COUNTIES</p> <p>8TH FEBRUARY - MARRIOTT HOTEL, PORTSMOUTH Hants, Wilts, Dorset & Isle Of Wight</p> <p>NORTH EAST</p> <p>20TH FEBRUARY - THREE TUNS HOTEL, DURHAM Cleveland, Co Durham, Tyne & Wear & Northumberland</p> <p>NORTH WEST</p> <p>21ST FEBRUARY - HAYDOCK PARK RACECOURSE, MERSEYSIDE Gt Manchester, Cheshire, Merseyside, Lanes & Chryd, West - South - North Yorkshire & Notts</p> <p>MIDLANDS</p> <p>22ND FEBRUARY - NEC, BIRMINGHAM Staffs, West Midlands, Warwickshire, Notts, Gloucestershire, Dyfed, Gwent, Leicestershire, Lincs, Norfolk, Beds, Cambs, Essex & Northants</p> <p>FOR A FULL LIST OF PROPERTY TO BE OFFERED CALL THE AUCTIONEER, 01753 611111 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE ALL CALLS CHARGED AT STANDARD RATES OFFICES: 1ST FLOOR, 101A, 102A, 103A, 104A, 105A, 106A, 107A, 108A, 109A, 110A, 111A, 112A, 113A, 114A, 115A, 116A, 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money

Best borrowing rates

Telephone	% Rate and period	Max adv %	Fee	Incentive	Redemption penalty
MORTGAGES					
Fixed rates					
Hinckley & Rugby Yorkshire BS	0800 774499	0.50 to 1/1/97	70	£250	3 yrs unemployment ins
Yorkshire BS	0800 578636	5.99 for 3 years	85	£250	1st 5 yrs: indiv determined
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	6.99 to 1/1/01	95	£295	1st 5 yrs: 6% of sum repaid
Variable rates					
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	1.09 for 1 year	95	—	£150 cash rebate
Principality BS	01222 344188	5.20 to 1/4/99	75	—	1st 5 yrs: rebate reclaimed & 6.1% of sum repaid
National Counties	01372 742211	5.99 for 5 years	70	—	1st 5 yrs: indiv determined
First time buyers fixed rates					
Bristol & West BS	0800 100117	0.95 to 31/1/97	90	£275	To 31/1/01: 9/8/6 mths int
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	4.49 to 1/3/98	95	£295	1st 5 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Mortgage Trust	0800 550551	7.49 to 1/1/01	95	—	1st 5 yrs: 6/3 mths interest
First time buyers variable rates					
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	1.19 to 1/3/97	90	—	Refund valuation fee
Maritime BS	0191 295 9550	4.24 to 1/4/98	90	£195	Refund valuation fee
Abbey National	0800 555100	6.34 to 31/1/01	90	—	Refund valuation fee

PERSONAL LOANS

Telephone	APR	Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years)
Unsecured		
Direct Line	0141 248 9966	14.90E
Midland Bank	0800 180180	15.40
Abbey National	0345 545556	15.50
Secured (second charge)		
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	8.60
Royal Bank of Scotland	Via branch	9.30
First Direct	0800 242424	9.80

OVERDRAFTS

Telephone	Account	Authorised % pm	Unauthorised % pm
Woodwich BS	0800 400900	Current	0.76
Alliance & Leicester BS	0500 959595	Alliance	0.76
Abbey National	0500 200500	Current	0.79

CREDIT CARDS

Telephone	Card	Min income	Rate %	APR %	Annual fee
Standard					
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.94G	11.80
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	1.00	14.60
Royal Bank of Scotland	0800 161616	MasterCard	—	1.14	14.50
Gold cards					
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.5208M	10.80
Royal Bank of Scotland	01702 362890	Visa	£20,000	1.05	14.50
NatWest Bank	0800 200400	Visa	£20,000	1.14	15.90

STORE CARDS

Telephone	Payment by direct debit % pm	Payment by other methods % pm
John Lewis	Via store	—
Marks & Spencer	01244 681681	1.87A
Sears	Via store	1.94

APR Annualised percentage rate.
 A 1.53% (19.9% APR) for 60 days over RUK.
 E Available to comprehensive credit insurance policyholders aged over 22 years.
 H Annual fee waived after first year of EMI+ charged to card during previous year.
 All rates subject to change without notice.

Best savings rates

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
Portman BS					
01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.80	Year
Teachers BS					
0800 378669	Build Share	Instant	£500	5.70	6 Months
Co-operative Bank					
0345 252000	Pathfinder	Instant	£5,000	5.37	Month
Skipton BS					
01756 700511	High Street	Instant	£30,000	6.50	Year

Manchester BS	0161 839 3545	Money by Mail	Postal	£1,000	5.50	Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 303330	Direct Access	Postal	£5,000	5.75	Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 303330	Direct Access	Postal	£10,000	5.80	Year
Manchester BS	0181 839 3545	Money by Mail	Postal	£25,000	6.25	Year

Nottingham BS	0115 948 1444	Postmark	7 day P	£2,500	5.75	Year
C&G	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£1,000	6.50	Year
C&G	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£10,000	6.75	Year
C&G	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£25,000	7.10	Year

Co-operative Bank	0345 252000	Pathfinder	Instant	£5,000	5.37	Month
C&G	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£5,000	6.31	Month
C&G	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£10,000	6.55	Month
C&G	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£25,000	6.88	Month

West Bromwich BS	0990 143668	Guaranteed Growth	31/1/97	£5,000	6.80F	Maturity
Sum Bank Corp	01438 744505	Investment Certs	2 yr bond	£1,000	6.80F	Year
Bradford & Bingley BS	01274 555332	Fixed Rate Bond	1/4/99	£2,500	6.90F	Year
Sum Bank Corp	01438 744505	Investment Certs	5 yr bond	£1,000	7.25F	Year

Chelston BS	0800 717575	Classic Postal	Instant	£2,500	4.50	Year
Kleinwort Benson	01202 502404	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.50	Month
Alliance & Leicester BS	0116 271 7272	Alliance	Instant	£5,000	5.00	Month
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Current A/C Gold	Instant	£10,000	5.27	Month

Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	1 year	£5,000	4.75FN	Year
Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	2 year	£5,000	5.00FN	Year
Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	3 year	£5,000	5.20FN	Year
Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	4 year	£5,000	5.40FN	Year
Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	5 year	£5,000	6.20FN	Year

Newcastle Bank, Gilt	00 350 76168	Nova Access	Instant	£5,000	6.10	Year
Skipton (Guernsey) Ltd	01481 727374	Guernsey 60	60 day	£25,000	6.75	Year
Portman CI Ltd	01481 322747	Gold Plus	90 day	£5,000	6.45	Year
Bham Midshires, Guern	01481 700680	Fixed Account	31.1.99	£5,000	7.25F	Year

Investment Account	1 month	£20	£20	5.25	Year
Income Bond	3 month	£20	£20	5.75	Year
Capital Bond	5 year	£100	£100	6.00	Year
First Option Bond	12 month	£100	£100	6.50	Month
Pensioner's Gated Income Bond	5 year	£100	£100	6.75	Month
NS Certificates (tax-free)	5 year	£100	£100	7.75 F	Maturity
42nd issue	5 year	£100	£100	6.40 F	Year
8th Index linked	5 year	£100	£100	6.80 F	Year
Children's Bond	5 year	£25	£25	7.50 F	Month

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FEAR OF FINANCE
Clifford German

The scramble to get aboard the building societies' free share bandwagon is at the same time unseemly and unfair. The chief executive of Woolwich, Peter Robinson, openly expressed his contempt last week for the carpetbaggers who had rushed to share the spoils with loyal members who have been customers of the society for many years and arbitrarily dispossessed 40,000 people who had opened accounts since the end of 1995 in the hope of making a quick buck when the society votes to become a bank.

No one will shed many tears over their misfortune. But there is no reason to condemn their actions as immoral, any more than it is wrong to condemn people for accepting free offers of any kind. They are simply taking advantage of opportunities created by commercial pressures on building societies and the absence of clear rules to prevent speculation.

In the past week Britannia and Alliance & Leicester have been forced to move to discourage speculators by refusing to open any more new accounts which offer an easy route to membership.

Closing an account to new investors is at least a clearer signal than a backdated cut-off date. But this will only redirect rather than end the frenzied search for speculative profits.

On Thursday, Bristol & West was forced to take the first steps down the same path and raise the minimum entry for share accounts to £2,500.

The choices facing most societies now are between attracting a flood of accounts they neither want nor need, adopting a permanent siege mentality, or

being pushed into an early decision to convert to banking status. As one society after another takes steps to protect itself the pressure on other societies to follow suit will inevitably increase, in the absence of any clear guidelines.

The only guidelines are contained in the Building Societies Act of 1986 but they are quite inadequate for current circumstances. The Act restricted "membership" of a building society to any adult who holds more than £100 in a share account and all current mortgage borrowers.

But there was and is no formal definition of what a share account conveying membership actually is. In 1986 it was left to the societies themselves to decide which accounts are share accounts conveying membership, and which were deposit accounts which do not convey membership rights.

Tessas generally count as share accounts while unit trusts bought from a building society do not. Most current accounts with a cheque book are classed as deposit accounts, while savings accounts accessed by a passbook or cash card are share accounts, but it is impossible to tell from the name of the account, because societies have given them all sorts of fancy names. You have to ask to be sure.

Many thousands of speculators will already have guaranteed themselves windfalls by opening accounts over the past year, while genuine long-term investors will miss out because they have deposit accounts and never knew the difference. Meanwhile if nothing is done the entire building society movement is liable to be swept away by the tide of speculation.

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As the one real
sin in investing is
sentimentality,
it pays to be
hard-nosed. The
Granada and Forte
saga is a useful
reminder of the
general truths
about investment

Granada's takeover bid for Forte has been one of the most ballyhooed for years, and resonates with echoes of the great corporate free-for-alls of the mid 1980s. Next week it comes to a climax when the big investment institutions will effectively decide whether to give Granada its prize. My guess is that when the votes are counted Granada will win, and for a simple and appropriate reason. It runs a business better.

It is true that Forte's defence has been both startling and dramatic, with the management unveiling more changes in a matter of weeks than it has produced in the previous 10 years. Such a vivid defence has certainly captured the attention of the City and the big institutions, many of whom previously took the view that Forte was a company with a rich crop of assets whose managers had simply gone to sleep.

This is not a matter of personalities. Nobody who has met him could doubt the integrity or commitment of Sir Rocco Forte to his family's business.

But it will not be enough to see off Granada, I suspect, for the

simple reason that the wholesale changes Forte has announced are an admission of weakness. They concede the point that Forte's management did not have the interests of shareholders high on their list of priorities. I have no doubt that the advice of the merchant bankers at the first meeting of the defence team was blunt but uncompromising: "get busy quickly, or you might as well give up".

But being busy alone is not enough. The choice investors face has boiled down to two things. One, is the price that Granada is offering reasonable? Answer, yes, though anyone who accepts Granada shares for their Forte shares must worry whether the Granada share price will hold up. (Private investors should think carefully about the option of selling their shares for cash in the market while they still can.)

Secondly, is there any reason to believe that Forte's management will suddenly find a new dynamism in the running of the rump of the business? My guess is that most institutions will reluctantly decide to put their trust in Granada's



JONATHAN DAVIS
INVESTMENTS

management. All the other factors that have been trotted out in Forte's defence – the promise of higher dividends, the coming upturn in the hotel business cycle and so on – will come into play whichever side wins.

Granada's boss Gerry Robinson remains the man with the reputation for turning businesses round, and while conglomerates which make their living on the strength of their turnaround skills do eventually run out of momentum (just look at Hanson), Robinson has yet

to put a foot wrong and will, I suspect, get the benefit of any doubt.

There are wider implications in the affair too, which is why this takeover, unlike Glaxo-Wellcome last year, has attracted comment beyond the narrow confines of the City pages. Big name columnists, such as Lord Rees-Mogg and Paul Johnson, have rallied to Forte's cause. Others have fulminated against the crude justice of the uninhibited culture of takeover which applies in this country, to the detriment, they believe, of our long-term economic prospects.

It is wise to take these periodic outbursts with a pinch of salt. The roll-call of names that has come out in Forte's defence is impressive, but does it demonstrate anything other than how far Forte, once the butt of derogatory jokes, has come in winning a place in the hearts of the Establishment? The logic of those who rail against Granada's bid is far from compelling.

The only point they make which is undoubtedly true is that the costs of the bid – which could run to £250m by the time you throw in the underwriting fees – are exces-

sive. They reflect the fact that the City's banks and professional firms enjoy a quasi-monopoly in the handling of takeover transactions. But the answer is not to blame the system, but to change it.

As far as investors are concerned, the issues about takeovers are relatively simple. As the one real sin in investing is sentimentality, it pays to be as hard-nosed as possible about deciding where your interests lie. In my view, the Granada and Forte saga is a useful reminder of general truths about stock market investment.

All companies have a life-cycle. Some run out of steam quickly, others more slowly. Only a handful find ways of regenerating themselves through more than one generation. Thirty years ago, Forte was the upstart caterer who took over the tired and moribund Trust Houses group. Takeovers are a crude but effective mechanism for putting new management, new capital and new ideas into flagging companies. Investors should have no quarrel with a system that gives them the opportunity to improve the quality of their investments in

this way, especially since it involves them in no real effort or outlay.

But most takeovers do not add value for the shareholders of the bidding company. The academic evidence on this point is overwhelming. The reason for this paradox is not that there is anything wrong with takeovers per se. It is that too many are embarked on for the wrong reasons (eg personal aggrandisement) and too many bidders pay more than they should. The flip side is that shareholders in the target companies often do better than they ought to.

So my conclusions are as follows. Forte shareholders should not complain about the Granada bid. It has already made them appreciably wealthier than they were before. Selling part at least of the holdings for cash seems a prudent hedge against either the bid failing or Granada proving to have overreached itself. Granada shareholders face a tougher choice, but my instinct is that the Gerry Robinson handwagon has not yet run its course – and the shares are good for a while yet. The next deal will probably be the one too far.

Expats need to keep an eye on the calendar to earn tax breaks

By Ian Hunter

Working overseas is becoming increasingly possible for UK nationals. They can work freely anywhere within the European Economic Area (EEA). This area consists of the 15 EU member states together with Norway and Iceland. Workers may still however have to register their presence with the police on arrival.

Employment in the United States is more regulated. Many UK nationals enter under the L1 visa which permits the temporary transfer of specialised employees to the United States for up to two years. Such employees must normally have worked for their employer for at least a year prior to transfer.

Careful tax planning is a must for well-paid overseas workers. Such employees fall into two categories for tax purposes, resident and non-resident.

If you have worked full-time abroad for at least a complete tax year (6 April in one year to 5 April in the following year) and have carried out all your duties abroad, you will not be treated as resident for tax purposes – provided you do not visit the UK for more than an average of 91 days in any year. If you have satisfied these conditions you will not be liable for UK tax on your earnings.

Alternatively, if you are not out of the United Kingdom for a complete tax year, you will be able to take advantage of an alternative tax concession, known as 365-day relief. This is available to those who remain resident in the UK for tax purposes but are out of the country for a qualifying period of 365 days.

Within this period, you can spend up to one sixth of your time in the UK, subject to a maximum of 62 consecutive days on any one visit.

If you qualify for this relief but return home permanently before the 365-day qualifying period is over, the relief is lost and income tax will be payable. UK tax is still payable on earnings from other sources such as share dividends or building society interest earned in the UK.

Those working abroad in a large number of countries

including the United States, Russia and Australia, have an additional advantage. The UK has entered into a number of double-tax treaties. Under these arrangements each country agrees to give up or reduce its tax in certain circumstances, to avoid individuals paying tax on earnings in two different countries. Even where no treaty exists, relief from UK tax will generally be

available on any foreign tax paid by UK residents.

Under the dual treaty arrangement, individuals who are sent to the United States by a UK employer with no permanent home over there are exempt from paying US Federal taxes – provided that they do not stay for more than 183 days in the relevant US tax year (1 January to 31 December). It is worth bearing

in mind that this exemption applies only to Federal taxes not individual State taxes.

The UK-US social security treaty provides that those working in the United States for a UK employer may continue to pay only UK contributions, provided the stay does not exceed five years.

If you go to work in Australia, you can carry on making

contributions for up to three years after leaving the UK to safeguard entitlements such as your basic retirement pension.

Your employer must in any event continue to pay your national insurance contributions during the first year that you are there.

If you do go to work anywhere overseas, you should ensure that your contract of

employment addresses at the outset all points of concern including the relocation package offered at the start and the repatriation arrangements at the end of the assignment.

Those working in countries with weak economies should also ensure that their salaries are paid in a stable currency such as sterling, US dollars or German marks.

TESSAWATCH

The latest cut in base rates could lead to early cuts in interest payable on variable rate Tessa and is expected to increase the attractions of fixed-rate offers.

West Bromwich BS has already cut the interest on its new flexible saver Tessa from 7.15 per cent to 6.75 per cent and the option to switch to a guaranteed rate after three years has been cut from 8.25 to 8 per cent.

Alliance & Leicester has closed its Tessa accounts to new investors to stop investors opening an account simply to qualify for shares when the society converts into a bank. Until Tuesday it allowed new investors to open a new Tessa with just £1,000.

Asset managers Johnson Fry now recommend a Tessa with Britannia (minimum balance of £250), Nationwide (minimum balance £25), Northern Rock (minimum £1), Birmingham Midshires (minimum £100) and Coventry Building Society (minimum £1), as the best way of combining a new Tessa with a takeover bet. All Tessa accounts are subject to transfer penalties once opened, but all qualify as share accounts.

Flemings and Save & Prosper have introduced a new higher rate deposit account with instant access, specifically aimed at investors with interest on maturing Tessas which they cannot roll-over. It is available to anyone with £1,000 or more of interest on a maturing Tessa. Interest is credited quarterly and can be rolled up and the basic rate is guaranteed not to be more than 1 per cent below Fleming's base rate for the rest of this year.

Derbyshire BS is now offering its 7.2 per cent fixed rate follow-up Tessa, originally limited to its own customers, to all investors who have maturing Tessas. A variable rate follow-up Tessa currently offers 4.87 per cent with a 50 per cent loyalty bonus on the interest after five years.

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money



loose change

Nine or ten new venture capital trusts are due to be launched in the next month to catch the seasonal tide of investors looking to shelter capital gains by investing in a VCT.

Edinburgh-based Hodgson Martin, a leading provider of business expansion schemes in the Eighties is looking for £13m to invest in a portfolio of around 20 AIM or unquoted companies with a proven management record.

Up to 20 per cent of the fund has to be invested in ordinary shares but up to 49 per cent can be put into preference shares and loan stock. The balance will go into short-dated gilts to help underwrite the target yield of 4 per cent, which tax reliefs can gear up to 12.5 per cent. The annual charge will not exceed 2 per cent and the minimum investment is just £2,000.

Several new personal equity plans based on investment trusts have been launched to try and catch the overspill from maturing Tessas. Schroders is launching a new Pep based on its UK Growth Fund launched in March 1994. Since then it has risen 25.4 per cent and is the second best of 34 investment trusts investing in UK shares, helped by the strong performance of holdings in Asda, Standard Chartered Bank and takeover victims Fisons, Boddington and TSB.

A new issue of shares is being made with warrants attached, both of which qualify for inclusion in a Pep. Launch expenses are capped at 4.5 per cent, the management charge has been shaved to 0.7 per cent plus VAT and

an extra 0.5 per cent plus VAT Pep charge. Minimum investments are £3,000 in a Pep or £1,000 outside. The offer closes at noon on 29 February.

Supermarket group Budgens is issuing a Visa loyalty card which doubles as a conventional Visa card, usable world-wide, and a loyalty card which earns points redeemable for vouchers to be spent in-store. The interest rate on unpaid balances is 22.4 per cent APR, the £15 annual fee is waived in year one and the card is then free to customers who spend over £2,000 a year.

The card earns five points for every £5 spent in Budgens and two points for every £5 spent elsewhere. Every 200 points each quarter qualifies for a £10 voucher. Budgens also offers cardholders a cash advance of £1,000, interest-free until May 1996, which can be used to pay off other credit card bills.

Murray Johnstone (0141-226 3131) has launched a new Dublin-based investment fund which will be able to invest in up to 20 short-dated Eurosterling loan stocks issued by financial institutions, which are not eligible for inclusion in a corporate bond Pep. Short-dated stocks maturing on average in about 30 months are less liable to fall in value if interest rates rise, the risks on stock issued by, for example, the World Bank, the European Investment Bank, Deutsche Bank, and Halifax are very low.

Yields of 8 per cent are anticipated, but interest is allowed to accumulate. Income is withdrawn by self-

ing shares in the fund and the gains alone are taxed as income.

No tax is payable until money is withdrawn, and ownership can be transferred to children or spouses for tax planning purposes. There is a sales charge of 2 per cent, an admin charge of 0.3 per cent and an annual management charge of 0.75 per cent, but no exit or withdrawal charges. The fund is launched on Monday, and the minimum subscription is £2,000.

Many mortgage lenders have withdrawn existing offers and replaced them with lower rates. Northern Rock has reduced its fixed rates to 4.49 per cent until March 1998, 6.24 per cent until March 1999 and 6.99 per cent to March 2001. An extra 0.25 per cent is charged if the society's insurance is not taken.

Leek United is offering a 2 per cent discount for three years on its 7.49 per cent standard variable rate, for a maximum 75 per cent loan to value. N&P is offering fixed rates of 7.3 per cent to the end January 2000, 7.65 per cent to January 2001 and 8.05 per cent to January 2002, all for 90 per cent loan to value.

Homeloans Direct has replaced its discount rates with a 4 per cent discount on the current 7.45 per cent variable rate for one year, 2 per cent discount for two years and 1.5 per cent discount for three years. Birmingham Midshires has a new fixed rate of 6.99 per cent to January 2000. Chesham has cut its mortgage rate to 7.29 per cent.

Leeds & Holbeck Building Society is offering a 10 year

fixed-rate repayment mortgage at 7.99 per cent throughout its life, targeted at those who want to pay off their mortgage quickly. On a £50,000 loan the monthly repayments are £598.60 compared with £364.10 on a 25-year mortgage at the same rate, and because of the higher repayments the society will only lend 2.5 times the main income plus a possible 0.5 times a second income.

But total repayments over the life of the loan are only £71,832 a saving of £37,400 over a comparable 25-year loan. The loan is portable but an early redemption fee of 180 days' interest is required. An extra 0.25 per cent is charged if the society's contents and buildings insurance is not taken and an application fee of £295 is charged but can be added to the loan.

Personal loan rates are being cut at TSB, by up to 3 per cent APR. Loans of £7,500 and upwards are now 14.9 per cent APR. Up to £2,999 the rate is 21.9 per cent, up to £4,999 18.9 per cent and between £5,000 and £7,500 the rate is 16.9 per cent APR.

Dial Direct is offering to guarantee no claims bonuses irrespective of circumstances or number of claims, for motorists over 25 with four years freedom from claims. Call freephone 0500 333600.

Scottish Equitable has produced a free brochure explaining the rules which can allow individuals to increase their contributions to personal pension plans and make up for lost time. Call freephone 0500 500170.

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critics' choice



DANCE

(above) is charred in white.
BBCC. Meanwhile, the real thing features
Viviana Durante and Sylvie Guillem. *Royal Opera
House, London WC2*
Corazon Flamenco's *Noche de Santiago* is a
laughable melodrama, but Manuela Carrasco's
virtuosic performance in the second half makes
amends. *Sadler's Wells, London EC1*
The Place Theatre's *Resolution* season highlights
the work of young choreographers. Tonight:
Rancocas Set Dance Co, Serious Dance Co and
Retina. *The Place, London WC1*

Lonise Lorrain

FILM

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Three day
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celebrating 75 years
of (10am-5.30pm,
open, Free).

Third Sunday after Epiphany

10:00 a.m. **St. James**, 10:30 a.m. **St. John**, 11:00 a.m. **St. Paul**, 11:30 a.m. **St. Peter**, 12:00 p.m. **St. Mary**, 12:30 p.m. **St. Michael**, 1:00 p.m. **St. George**, 1:30 p.m. **St. Andrew**, 2:00 p.m. **St. Nicholas**, 2:30 p.m. **St. Basil**, 3:00 p.m. **St. Raphael**, 3:30 p.m. **St. Isaac**, 4:00 p.m. **St. Ephraim**, 4:30 p.m. **St. Simeon**, 5:00 p.m. **St. Iosaph**, 5:30 p.m. **St. John**, 6:00 p.m. **St. Peter**, 6:30 p.m. **St. Paul**, 7:00 p.m. **St. Mary**, 7:30 p.m. **St. Michael**, 8:00 p.m. **St. George**, 8:30 p.m. **St. Andrew**, 9:00 p.m. **St. Nicholas**, 9:30 p.m. **St. Basil**, 10:00 p.m. **St. Raphael**, 10:30 p.m. **St. Isaac**, 11:00 p.m. **St. Ephraim**, 11:30 p.m. **St. Simeon**, 12:00 a.m. **St. Iosaph**, 12:30 a.m. **St. John**, 1:00 a.m. **St. Peter**, 1:30 a.m. **St. Paul**, 2:00 a.m. **St. Mary**, 2:30 a.m. **St. Michael**, 3:00 a.m. **St. George**, 3:30 a.m. **St. Andrew**, 4:00 a.m. **St. Nicholas**, 4:30 a.m. **St. Basil**, 5:00 a.m. 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Radio

by Robert Hanks

Paul Merton in Galton and Simpson's...
 3.30pm ITV Gdm: Paul Merton pretends
 he's Tony Hancock and acts out vintage
 Galton and Simpson scripts (7220).
 4pm BBC1 (Frank Marshall 1993 US)
 0.25pm BBC1: South American rugby
 players crash land in the Andes. Mmm.
 Now, what's for dinner... (875688).
 The Grille Show 11.05pm CA (above).
 Meet the New Ladies: Breath of fresh
 air or miscalculated media construct?
 360220).

cosing in a Flap 10am R4FM: Crazy Ray, God's reward to radio for being good, examines the mysterious case of the "Broadhaven Triangle" - an area around Haverfordwest which played host to 45 separate sightings of UFOs in 1977.

BBC 1

- 6.50 **ER** Abbott and Costello Meet the Killer, Boris Karloff (Charles T Barton 1949 US). Bud and Lou fun-and-games team in a hotel (7603402).
- 7.15 **Suenos** - World War II in a hotel (7603402).
- 8.30 **Breakfast with Frost**. Paddy Ashdown sips orange juice with Frostie, joined on satellite by George Bush (94841).
- 9.30 **The Big Question**. Mark Lawson quizzes Archbishop Desmond Tutu (S378518).
- 9.45 **First Light** (S166599).
- 10.15 **See Hear!** (S181808).
- 10.45 **The French Experience** (S1892131).
- 11.00 **The 11th Hour** (S91995).
- 12.00 **CountryFile** (S188228).
- 12.30 **On the Record** (88537).
- 1.30 **EastEnders**. Omnilbus (S5374976). *
- 2.55 **ER** Raiders of the Lost Ark (Steven Spielberg 1981 US). Harrison Ford's archaeologist superhero chases the Nazis for the Ark of the Covenant (S5693131). *
- 4.40 **The Pink Panther Show** (9872402).
- 5.05 **Lifeline**. Gary Lineker appeals on behalf of the Sick Children's Trust (S4249082). *
- 5.15 **Black Hearts in Battersea**. 4/6. Imaginative children's drama from the novel by Joan Aiken (S604334). *
- 5.45 **News; Weather** (365605). *
- 6.05 **Regional News**. (713889).
- 6.10 **Songs of Praise**. Dame Thora Hird talks to Sally Magnusson (S196006).
- 6.45 **Antiques Roadshow**. From Jersey (S317605). *
- 7.30 **Pie in the Sky**. Richard Griffiths's breathless sleuthing restaurateur embroiled in a feud between his copper colleagues and a regular customer (S638860).
- 8.20 **As Time Goes By** (S985624). *
- 8.50 **News; Weather** (925402). *
- 9.05 **Alive and Kicking**. Lenny Henry plays an invulnerable-feeling drug dealer and Robbie Coltrane is the tough unconventional therapist in this repeat of Al Hunter's 1991 drama. See *Preview*, p28 (46029421).
- 9.40 **The Lenny Henry Show**. New series of the big man's sketch show finds him on worse form than in the above drama. Trevor McDonald agrees to send himself up, while Eddi Reader provides a song (S907150).
- 1.25 **ER** Married to the Mob (Jonathan Demme 1988 US). Engaged enough comedy-thriller star Michelle Pfeiffer goes to the mobster husband Al Pacino. Baldwin is rubbed out by rival Mafia Don Stockwell (excellent), who then falls in love with her, pursuing her (as do the FBI) back to her New York roots (816605). *
- 1.05 **Weather** (8931254). To 1 *Dam*.

BBC 2

7.30 Children's BBC: Rupert. 7.35 The Adventures of Skippy. 8.00 Playdays. 8.20 Grinny. 8.35 Junior's Vicky. 9.00 The Felix that sat, 9.10 Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles. 9.35 Phantoms. 2040. 9.55 Highly Sprung! 10.25 Grange Hill. 10.50 Agent Z and the Penguin from Mars. 11.15 As Seen on TV.

11.45 Star Trek (R) (1493869). *

12.35 Fantasy Football League (R) (S) (6459889).

1.05 Singled Out. American dating show (2380841).

1.30 Regional Programmes (88771).

2.00 [612] Henry V (Kenneth Branagh 1989 UK). Ken's ambitious filming of Shakespeare is bloodier and more gloomy than Olivier's exultant post-war version. A certain naïveté in the filmcraft, but you can't fault the committed performances of Paul Scofield (the French king), Derek Jacobi (Chorus), Judi Dench (Missess Quickly) and Brian Blessed (Exeter) (84932150). *

4.15 SM Sunday. The women's downhill from Cortina (6140470).

4.55 Rugby Special. Yesterday's opening matches for the Six Nations Championships (S) (1577711).

5.55 Natural World. Say "hello" to the cephalopods, a group of molluscs that include squid, octopus and cuttlefish (8449155). *

6.45 The Big Trip. Second visit to our exhaustingly energetic camcorder tourists as they leg it to Guyana, Bangkok and Madel. Helen and Alison in Thailand are topical after this week's grisly events (S) (3152474). *

7.30 Timewatch. The previously hidden extent of Stalin's role in the Korean War. See *Preview*, p28 (S) (636402). *

8.20 In Search of Power. Geoff Mulgan travels to Sheffield to find out what powers consumers and employees really possess (507112).

9.00 The Tourist. Tomorrows' 50-year rise from fishing village to high-rise horror-in-the-sun. See *Preview*, p28 (S) (344568). *

9.50 Another Foot in the Past. Topiary (S) (993624).

10.00 [612] Sarah, Plain and Tall (Glenn Jordan 1991 USA). Which is how turn-of-the-century East Coast lass Glenn Coxe describes herself when answering an ad for a new step-mother and father Charles and Willen in this gentle, wistful adaptation of Patricia MacLachlan's children's book (665808).

1.35 [612] Picnic at Hanging Rock (Peter Weir 1975 Aus). Still at the turn of the century – St Valentine's Day 1900 – and three schoolgirls and their teacher go missing while out on a picnic, in Weir's enigmatic early film (375537). To 1.30am.

2.00 The Learning Zone. To 6.00am.

ITV/London

6.00 **GMTV**, 6.00 **The Sunday Review**, 6.30 **News and Sport**, 7.00 **The Sunday Programme** (50995).
 6.00 **Disney Club**. There's advice, boys and girls, from the stylish Ashley Rosales, and music from the Back Street Boys (S) (35361976). *

10.15 **Link** (S) (7284537). *

10.30 **Sunday Matters**. Including 11.00 Morning Worship from St Peter Mancroft, Norwich (CE) (S) (29808).

12.30 **CrossTalk** (83266).
 1.00 **News, Weather** (28901860). *
 1.10 **Jonathan Dimbleby** (8922773).
 2.00 **Yesterday's Heroes**. Lou Macari and Dennis Tuart (4315).
 2.00 **THE Incredible Hulk Returns** (Nicholas Corea 1988 US). Why? (15488808).
 4.25 **Cartoon** (8932570).
 4.35 **Murder in the Works**. A reporter arrives on Jessica's doorstep with new evidence on a 30-year-old mystery. He came to the right place (1140421).
 5.30 **Local News, Weather** (362518). *

5.50 **News, Weather** (624860). *

6.05 **THE Rocketeer** (Joe Johnston 1991 US). This Disney comic-strip fantasy deserved better at the box office. Perhaps it just lacked a star name, as Bill Campbell plays a 1930s pilot who stumbles across a rocket pack that enables him to fly. Timothy Dalton's smarmy agent and a host of Nazi secret agents also want to get their hands on the rocket (S) (70114841). *

8.00 **A Touch of Frost**. A male prostitute is murdered (S) (8976).

10.00 **Lights, Camera, Action: A Centenary of the Cinema**. Or In Michael Aspel's case - lights, suncream, action - as the year-round tanned one continues to narrate this strangely selective "history" of the movies. This week looks at sex and the censors with usual list of B-list has-beens (S) (1781). *

11.00 **News, Weather** (378334). *

11.15 **Spitting Image**. More late star strains for real laughs as Paula Yates, Quentin Tarantino and Anthea Turner turn up as easy targets (983533).
 11.45 **Compass**. Madagascar (R) (384228).
 12.45 **THE Girls Just Wanna Have Fun** (Alan Metter 1985 US). And you'll just want to go to bed, unless Sarah Jean Redman's comedies are your cuppa. Direct catch a better lead than it deserves, though, as Clara Jessica Parker (1494).

2.30 **Cue the Music**. Taj Mahal (R) (781393).
 3.25 **THE I'm Gonna Git You Sucka** (Keenen Ivory Wayans 1989 US). Fairly amusing take-off of all those blaxploitation movies of the early 1970s (Followed by Night Shift) (S) (722648).

5.05 **ITV Sport Classics**. To 5.30am.

Channel 4

6.25 **Bizet (R)** (8562112).

7.20 **Take 5, With The Magic Roundabout, Bush Tails, Natalie, her Engine and Juggy Bear** (C) (37518).

7.50 **The Magic School Bus (S)** (7393044).

8.20 **Hong Kong Phooey** (8523605).

8.30 **Stunt Dogs** (43150).

9.00 **Biker Mice from Mars (R)** (4141353).

9.25 **The Secret World of Alex Mack** (4120860).

9.50 **Earthworm Jim (S)** (1684044).

10.15 **Saved by the Bell: The New Class** (174518). *

10.45 **Rocko's Modern Life (S)** (173889).

11.15 **Rawhide** (581044).

11.25 **Mission Impossible** (879711). *

11.55 **Football Italia. Torino vs Fiorentina** (63257605).

3.30 **The Grand National. Animated impression of the (In)amous horse race** (2850315).

4.00 **Wildfire** (See William A. Werten 1944 US).

4.30 **Highly Imaginative** (in the wrong sense) telling of the William Cody legend, with Joel McCrea at the abhorrent in the lead role. Also with Maureen O'Hara, Linda Darnell, and Anthony Quinn – the latter two made up as Indians (453773).

5.30 **Hollywoods**. More on Louise's hair, in Monday's episode of the airbrushed teen soap (R) (S) (518).

6.00 **The Persuaders!** Brett and Danny attempt to help a woman whose car has broken down beside the road. That's their story, anyway (66959). *

7.00 **Time Team**. Tony Robinson and chums head off to Templecombe, Somerset in search of the base of the Knights Templar (S) (9082).

8.00 **Wired World**. See *Preview*, p28 (S) (5421).

8.30 **Alfred Hitchcock's Home Mystery Carmichael (Jim)** (Aberbach 1991 US). Winona Ryder in the sort of role she excels at, as a teenage small-town misfit (cf *Mean Girls* and *Heathers*), who believes that a returning minor celebrity – and one-time teenage misfit of this particular small town – must be her real mother since she is adopted. Jeff Daniels also thinks *Rocky* is returning for him, as he was once her boyfriend (53600995). *

10.20 **Jack and Jeremy's Police 4**. Jack Dee and Jeremy Hardy spoof of *Crimewatch*. Tough ones, lads (R) (S) (257334).

10.50 **SNIP Night on Earth** (Jim Jarmusch 1991 US). Winona Ryder again, this time as the cabbie driving one of the taxis in one of the five different, typically Jarmuschian tales all happening in or around Paris at the same time in Los Angeles, Paris, Rome, New York and Helsinki. If you see what I mean! (2010477).

11.10 **Shari's Chavva** (Shawna 1949 India) Comedy about a young poet in love with a young woman while he is loved by someone else. You know the score. In Urdu (31666648). To 3.4am.

ITV/Regions

[illegible]

Radio

Radio 1
6.15-6.30am Kevin Greening 10.00
Dave Pearce 2.00 Soul on Sunday
4.00 UK Top 40 7.00 Signs of the
Times 8.00 Radio 1 Rock Show
10.00 Andy Kershaw 12.00 Mark
Tenderai 4.00-5.30am Eve Warner

Radio 2
(03-10-1982)
7.00am Don Maclean 9.05
Michael Aspel 10.30 Hayes on
the Radio 11.00 News and Carington
12.00 Benny Green 3.00 David Ja-
cobs 4.00 Three Beautiful Ballads
5.00 Sunday Soapbox 7.00 Bryan
Forsyth 8.30 Sunday 10.00
Radio 2 11.00 12.05 The
Life, a Singular Skill 1.00 Double
3.00 3.30 6.00-6.00am Alex Lester

Radio 3
9.30-10.45am RW
10.45-11.00am Open University.
11.00 Sacred and Profane.
11.55 Choice of Three.
12.00 Brian Kay's Sunday Morning.
12.15 Music Market.
1.00-1.15 Charles live Weekend. A
concert featuring the cantata The
Celestial Country. BBC Singers,
Duke Quartet, Christopher Hughes
(organ), Members of the New
England Chamber Orchestra, the
Clarebury, BBC Symphony Orches-
tra/Andrew Davis.
1.30 Charles live Weekend. BBC
Singers, Members of the New
England Chamber Orchestra,
Clarebury, Psalm 90; Psalm 67;
Variations on "America"; Crossing
the Bar; Easter Carol; Adagio li-
telleo in an Organ Prelude;
and "The Psalm 135.
1.40 Spirit of the Age. (1/2).
2.00 Amsterdam Loeki Stardust
Quartet. (2/2).
2.45 The Sunday Feature: Opening
the 1982 Festival and present responses
to its chorale preludes by JS Bach,
written and presented by Leo Ayler.
3.30 Celio and Paula. Schubert:
Arpeggione Sonata in A minor. Fal-
lar, arr Marchetti. Suite pour piano
Cassado: Requies. 3.50
Charles live Weekend. Live
from the Barbican Centre. BBC
Symphony Chorus and Orches-
tra/Andrew Davis. 4.00 Harvest
2 (IS 2-8-45 lives in His Place.
Michael Oliver considers the in-
fluence of Emerson, Thoreau and
the New England transcendental-
ists on his work's.) General
William Booth Enters into Hea-
ven. 4.15
4.45 The Sunday Play: for colored

Choice

10.15 Medicine Now.
11.00 The Final Frontier.
11.15 In Committee.
11.45 Seeds of Faith. (3/3).
12.00 News.
12.30 The Late Story: The Tree-
house and the Newel Gables.
12.48 Shipping Forecast.
1.00am As World Service.

Radio 5
653.95kHz
6.05am Straight Up 6.30 Brian
Hayes at Breakfast 9.05 Sunday
with Mair 11.35 Special Assignment
12.00 Midday Edition 12.15 The
12.15 By 12.05 Baker and Kelly Up
From 3.00 by Gary Lineker's Sunday
Sport 6.05 Jim and the Doc 7.00
News 8.05 7.35 The Acid Test 8.05
Taking Drugs Seriously 8.35 Asian
Football 9.00 Kelly Worldwide
10.05 Out This Week 10.35 Crime
Desk 11.00 Night News 12.05
Nightbeat 2.05 Up All Night 5.00-
6.00am Morning Reports

Classic FM
100.9MHz
6.00am Sarah Lucas 9.00 Classic
Remembrance 12.00 Celebrity Crime
12.05 Martin 3.00 Musicless
4.00 Robert Bosh 7.00 Book
Browse 8.00 Evening Concert. A
concert of works by Handel, Vivaldi
and Telemann recorded at Ham House,
Strawinskyl, Zven Kocperan (director/producer),
10.00 Margaret, Faceless Woman,
10.00 Howard's Week 12.00 Andre
Leon 4.00-6.00am Mark Griffiths

Virgin Radio
102.1MHz
6.00am Janey Lee Grace 10.00
Paul Cayton 2.00 Nicky Home 6.00
Marti Johnson 10.00 Gary Davies
2.00 - 6.00am Paddy Searns

World Service
653.95kHz
1.00am Virgin News 1.10 Press Re-
sponse 1.15 Read Loud 1.30 Anything
2.00 News 2.15 Saturday 2.30 Composer
of the Week 3.00 Read Loud 3.15
3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30 Jazz for
the Asleep 4.00 Newsweek 4.30 Euro-
pean News 4.45 Read Loud 5.00
Newsday 5.30 Europe Today

Satellite

ONE
6.00am *Hour of Power* (V) (48/43)
7.00am *Today* (49/07/05) 10.00
Groucho-Lesslie (72/79) 12.00 *Mavel Action Hour* (22/79) 1.00 *Star Trek* (21/59) 2.00 *The Adventures of Brisco County Junior* (62/50)
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Pastimes

Chess William Hartston

There are two ways to play with Black: either you accept a slight passivity from the start, or you lash out with a counter-attacking system. Most world champions have come to the sober conclusion that defending with a straight bat leads to better results—at least at the highest level. The Bulgarian Veselin Topalov, however, has been doing well with a finely-honed repertoire of sharp openings as Black. His Dragon Sicilian and Modern Benoni have scored well, but not in today's game from Wijk aan Zee.

Black's 8...Nbd7? challenges the whole idea of 7.f4 and 8.Bb5+, encouraging White to win a piece by pushing his e-pawn. After 13...Qxd1, Black has a messy position with rough material equality. What more could

Bridge Alan Hiron

Game all; dealer South

North		East	
♠A J 6 2		♠K 9 8 3	
♥Q 10 3 2		♥K 8 5	
♦6 5 2		♦9 8 3	
♣K 2		♣J 10 6	

West	South
♠7 5	♠Q 10 4
♥17 6	♥A 9 4
♦K 7 4	♦A Q J 10
♣Q 8 7 5 4	♣A 9 3

In the coming week, there is the chance to see some first-class bridge in London. The field for the Macallan

Perplexity

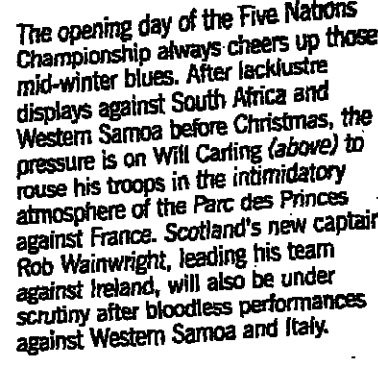
Losswords: Our dictionary has been deleting the letters from each defined word, in the correct order, then closing gaps between words. Thus "pencil" defined as "implement to inscribe letters" appears as "imlmettoinsrbeetters". But what are the following: **notnalsasetmasspor (7)** **theseyacafirfruck (7)** **rialarssamen (4)** (The number in brackets is the length of the lost word). **A Larousse Desk Reference Encyclopedia** will be awarded to the first correct answer opened on 1 February. Entries to: Saturday Pastimes, the *Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

6 January answers: Porcupine, Armadillo, Terrapin. Winner: P Pavey (Romsey).

held better diamonds) and now it was declarator who had the problem.

At least one South, trying for overticks, greedily took a spade finesse. This lost, the clubs were cleared, and West still had his diamond entry. Well, this could have been right but, with Butler scoring in operation, the loss of a vulnerable game was a disaster. When the ♠ Q holds it must be right to continue with the ace and another, attacking West's possible entry, at the expense of an overtick.

The Maccallan Fair. The Winn House (Nr. Gt Portland) St. Neots, 24-26 January. Enquiries: 0181-878-5824.



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Peter Popham charts the decline in linguistic diversity as the world laments the loss of another Native American tongue

The day a language died

This week, another language died: Carlos Westez, more widely known as Red Thunder Cloud, the last speaker of the Native American language Catawba, died of a stroke at the age of 76. With him passed away the Catawba language.

Anyone who wants to hear the war songs, the hunting songs and the religious chants of the Catawba can apply to the Smithsonian Museum where, back in the Forties, Red Thunder Cloud recorded a series of them for posterity. Some earnest folk might even take the trouble to learn some of them by heart. But Catawba as something that lived and breathed and developed organically is gone for good. Of the creatures alive on the planet, only Red Thunder Cloud's dog, which survived him and understood commands in no other tongue, still presumably has matches of Catawba rolling around his brain.

All of us have been alerted over the past 20 years to the damage that modern industry can inflict on the world's ecology: how the destruction of the rain-forest also brings about the death of untold species of plants and insects that the forest protects, and how insecticides and herbicides lead to the "silent spring". Rachel Carson wrote about in the Sixties.

Less obvious, but no less powerful, is the impact of a homogenising monoculture upon our languages and ways of life. We are witnessing the spread of English, carried by American culture, delivered by Japanese technology. We also are witnessing the hegemony of a few great, transnational tongues: Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Hindi. With their rise as tools of culture and commerce has come the deaths of hundreds of other tongues that are the losers in the competition for linguistic survival.

Scholars believe there are some 6,000 languages around the world. Not only is the richest plant life closest to the equator, but so is the richest linguistic life. The fecundity of nature means that tribes can survive in smaller areas in relative isolation beyond the reach of the outside world, so keeping their culture and language intact. But most of these

languages are spoken by very small numbers of people and, according to Gail Vines, writing recently in *New Scientist*, more than half of them could die out within the next 100 years.

Vanuatu is the language native to Vanuatu in the Pacific. But its fate is sealed: like Catawba (until this week), it is spoken by that island's only remaining native inhabitant. So it, too, is bound to die out. Many other languages will share its fate: a large proportion of the languages of Ethiopia are used by tiny numbers of people. Two speakers of the Ethiopian language Gafat were fine until a well-intentioned language researcher took them out of their

the Catawba tribe, and the language was not his mother tongue. But he was a frequent visitor to the reservation in South Carolina and immersed himself in the language. The songs he recorded for the Smithsonian helped to start a craze for native American music. In his attempt to spread word of the tribe's language and culture, he came as far as Britain, where in 1992 he erected a totem in Edinburgh and gave demonstrations of story-telling.

Now he is gone and the language is dead – but what does it mean for the rest of us when a language disappears? When a plant or insect or animal species dies, it is easy to understand

ries of language, advanced by philosophers such as John Hume, were that words and ideas stood for sensations and feelings. It was only in the 20th century that the theories of language became more complex and proliferated. Ludwig Wittgenstein, the Austrian philosopher, argued that language was essentially a public affair, not the product of something that happened in our brains. Noam Chomsky, the American academic, made a reputation for himself with the claim that we can only speak languages because our brains have an innate capacity to understand the underlying structure of a language. More recently Mark Pagel, a biomathematician in the Zoology department of Oxford University, has taken this idea further, claiming that learning a language brings about permanent changes to one's brain – changes at a physiological level. One example he gives is of the Japanese inability to distinguish the letters "l" and "r". All babies the world over, he says, can tell all sounds apart; so if Japanese adults cease to be able to differentiate certain letters, he says, "The brains of Japanese-speaking adults differ from those of non-Japanese speaking adults, and do so at a physiological level."

The theory lacks neurological substantiation, but one's own experience as a language learner is that to speak another language is to become another person. Who among those who have learned to speak French moderately well has not had the sensation of discovering a new personality, one to whom shrugs, hand gestures, and an urge towards precision come naturally?

Learning a language that is extremely remote from English, such as Japanese, is to take on a radically new identity. In Japanese, one discovers, it seems impossible to have the sort of hammer-and-tongs discussions that are easy in European languages. There are immense opportunities for vagueness, and great difficulties in being precise. There are many different ways of saying thank you and sorry, half a dozen different ways of saying "I", many subtle ways of expressing formality or intimacy, humility or arrogance, without saying anything of substance at all.



Celtic revival: Welsh is now taught as part of the national curriculum

Western Mail

churches, and as Sanskrit is still employed in Buddhism.

In Israel, however, it is now the universal language of everyday life; it has arisen from a 2,000-year sleep, once again to breathe, change, develop slang, accents and obscurities. The reason this has happened was the simple necessity of forging a nation out of the disparate ingredients that were "ingathered." Language – especially if it is already defined as the language of the tribe – is the only thing that can have that sort of binding function.

English played a similar role in binding together the polyglot, multicultural elements of the empire, and making a self-conscious entity of them. But while the engine of colonialism long ago ran out of steam, the momentum of its languages is still formidable, and it is against their tyranny that the smaller languages fight to survive.

Indeed, there are signs of a growing trend to defend regional languages as a way of defending regional identities against the onslaught of global culture. In our own backyard, the surviving Celtic languages still fight it out. In the last century, the proper thing to do with Welsh, it was generally agreed, was to stamp it out.

This century the decline of Welsh has been slowed and, arguably, reversed: from about 900,000 speakers at the turn of the century, the number has shrunk to half a million. But vigorous campaigning has meant that the numbers speaking Welsh has stabilised. More than 21 per cent of the population, according to a recent survey, speaks the national tongue; of that number, it is the mother tongue of 55 per cent. Most significantly, the use of the language among young people is now climbing again, thanks to its inclusion in the National Curriculum: in 1993/4, 78.4 per cent of pupils learned it as either first or second language.

This, then, is one language that is not going the way of Red Thunder Cloud and Catawba. But what difference does it make if you speak Welsh? How differently does one see the world? What is the nature of one's potential Welsh personality? Those are questions impossible to answer without learning it.

Jo Brand's week

The Americans are building a holiday complex to be used by wealthy Arabs in Eritrea. It's a handy 45 minutes' flying time from Mecca, and is for the men to leave behind the restrictions placed upon them at home. Are Arab women going to have a corresponding knees-up and throw caution to the winds? Of course not. A separate complex is being built for women and children, where they will be dumped into the care of an all-female staff, while their men go for it in style at the boys' hotel. You can be sure American businessmen will respect the cultural differences of others when there is cash involved. Lots of liberal people bite their tongues about the activities of Muslims, even though they can see that women are treated like second-class citizens, because they don't want to interfere in years of religious tradition. Well, we are all entitled to an opinion and I think this project is Victorian, machronistic and macho. Let's just hope Butlins doesn't pick up on the idea.



101 Dalmatians: modern morality

Given the media attention paid to the increasing disintegration of our society and the attendant negative moral effect on children, one could almost believe that all the little blighters are drug-sodden, lawless, aggressive monsters who are sexually active before they manage their nine-times table. So it was reassuring to see a children's show in Cardiff last week and discover that the good old traditions of boozing the baddies and encouraging the goodies were still there. The show was *101 Dalmatians*, and my friend Helen had the joy of playing Cruella De Vil. As the human-doggy stars of the show

searched frantically for their puppies, a plaintive little voice shouted: "They've gone to Suffolk." A budding stakeholder and no mistake.

I, too, am bucking under the strain of the ferocious way the press pack chases for stories and pictures. As I sat in a hotel in Cardiff with some friends last weekend, the night manager of the hotel sidled up shyly and asked for a word. He informed me that someone from the *South Wales Echo* had tracked me down and wanted a few words, but acting on his own initiative, the aforementioned manager had sent him away. How am I going to cope with this huge onslaught?

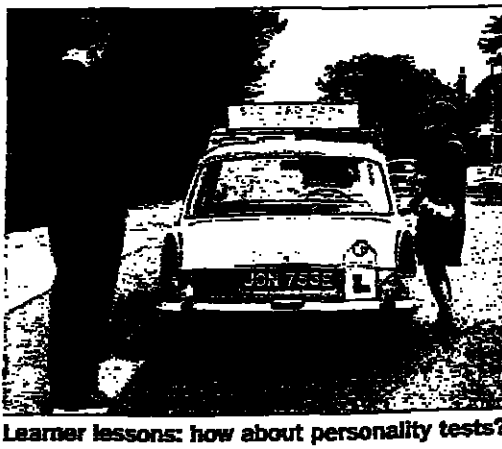
Extra driving examiners are being taken on to handle the rush of learners who want to pass their test before written tests start in July. Who can blame them? I always felt that the information regarding stopping distances and the like was hanging by a thread in my brain. However, at least I do know that stopping distances are not five feet, which many drivers on the motorway seem to assume. Perhaps a personality test would be more appropriate: it's always those with the personality of Attila the Hun who loom right up close behind you, ignoring safety in favour of giving rein to stupid Death Race 2000 antics. If only teaching



them a lesson didn't involve getting mangled oneself. I'd have a whale of a time practising my emergency stops.

Doctor Who is to be resurrected one more time for a feature film starring one of the McGann brothers. I read recently that, although there had been seven Doctor Whos, there have been about 30 lovely female assistants. I wonder why that should be? We women must be four times more disposable than men.

A district court in New Mexico has halted a buffalo hunt at the behest of American Indian and animal rights groups. The hunt was intended to eliminate nine old bison who can "no longer chew their food", and to tackle



Learner lessons: how about personality tests?

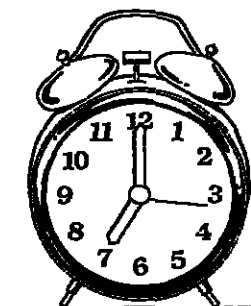
the problem that there are "far too many bulls and not enough cows". Perhaps we could get the hunters over here to sort out our judiciary instead.

A recent piece of research conducted in Germany shows that when Germans were offered another national identity, hardly any of them picked Britain, preferring Switzerland or Sweden, and traipsing through Japan, Italy, America and France before they got to us. This isn't much of a surprise, given our attitude to them, which consists of a firm belief that Germans only go on holiday to throw their weight and towels around. Yes, some are like that, but perhaps we need to look to our own record before we start casting aspersions in their direction. The *Sun* is always peppered with insults, the Tory party is filled with paranoia about Germans and my sister-in-law, who is German, has not received the politest of welcomes in a number of pubs over here. Germans seem to think we are a poverty-stricken little nation (not far wrong). In fact, my brother's mother-in-law, thinking we were really poor over here, once offered to send me a food parcel. I said yes. Any food always gratefully received.

A Canadian photo-processing company has worked out a way to etch out a person from a photograph without leaving a mark and has put this technique to good use for divorced couples who do not want to be reminded of their errant spouse. What a strange thing to do. I would have thought pinning the photo up on the wall and throwing a few darts and maybe some ageing spaghetti at it would have been much more fulfilling.

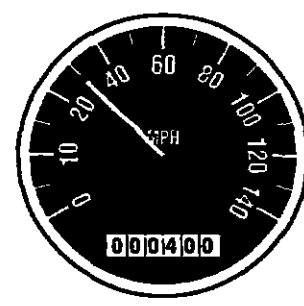
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The way is still clear for a tyrant and a fraud

It was the largest fraud in modern British corporate history. The crime was blatant: the theft of more than £400m from the Maxwell pension funds. The culprit was obvious and well known. The prosecution had an open and shut case. Sadly, there was one insurmountable obstacle: Robert Maxwell, the mastermind of the fraud was dead.

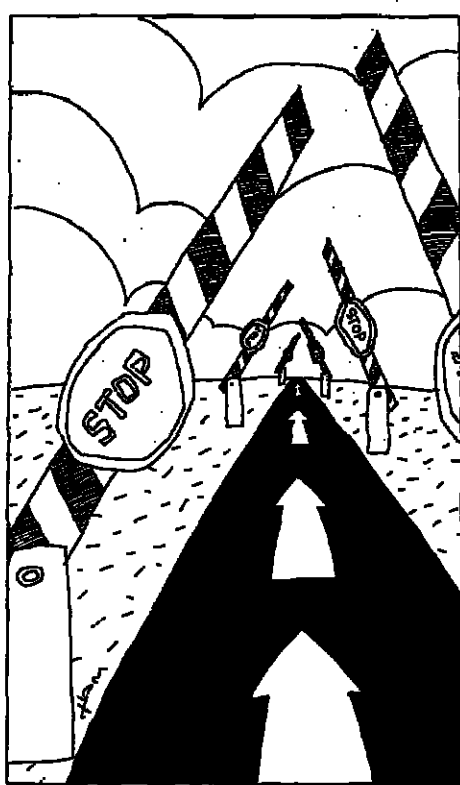
So, instead of Maxwell himself being put on trial, his underlings in chief, two sons - Kevin and Ian - and Larry Trachtenburg, a former business advisor, were called to account for what happened. They were charged with raiding the company pension fund to prop up Maxwell's failing empire. We will probably never know what went through the jurors' minds as they acquitted all three yesterday. But, by the end of the trial, it is fair to assume that the jury saw them as the victims, not the perpetrators, of a corporate tyranny that threatened to rob so many people of their pensions. They accepted the contention that Maxwell had kept secret from his lieutenants the way that assets belonging to the pension fund were being illegally used to bail out the company.

Robert Maxwell was a terrifying individual. Kevin told the court: "I was in awe of him as a child. I was frightened. The domination was in part physical, part charismatic, and he also dominated by virtue of his success. He was capable of being extremely charming to people, he was capable of being winning, but he was also capable of verbal brutality in meetings, public dressing-downs not only of his children but also his senior managers."

Maxwell was a dictator, operating in an environment where no-one dared to confront him. It is not surprising that Robert Maxwell was so at ease with the authoritarian governments of eastern Europe. He found his natural home in the modern corporation, one of the last bastions of unfettered power, where the usual rules of democratic societies - accountability, openness and checks on power - are often weak if not waived altogether. Who would dare question Maxwell when he was founder, chief executive, chairman, court of appeal and arbiter of all?

It would probably have been very neat for many people if the Maxwell sons had been convicted yesterday. The whole affair could then have been written off as an evil family conspiracy. There will be some who will feel cheated by the acquittals, who want to see the Maxwell family pay. Yet the acquittals help us focus upon the significance of the fraud for the way our companies and pension funds are run. Robert Maxwell did not act alone. There were a string of accomplices who are still at large. Those accomplices are the blatant and easily correctable weaknesses in the way large companies are governed. Maxwell was able to commit his crime because he was able to exploit these shortcomings. Maxwell's crime was a gross abuse of power. The only way to ensure such crimes cannot be committed again in future is to ensure such abuse of power is not possible.

As a result, Maxwell still casts a long shadow over corporate life. He was able to continue to commit his crimes over many years only because several watchdogs failed in their task of pro-



tecting the interests of ordinary people, in this case, pensioners.

The roll call of institutions that might have taken action to prevent Maxwell is long and illustrious. Back in 1971, a Department of Trade investigation concluded that Maxwell was unfit "to exercise stewardship of a publicly quoted company". The court heard that Maxwell's accounts, KPMG, knew in 1988 that Robert Maxwell was using pension fund investments as collateral for his takeover bids. Coopers & Lybrand, another firm of accountants, denied in court having known for a decade that the tycoon was moving assets around his empire.

Whatever warning signals there may have been, Maxwell remained in charge not only of a major company but of the pensions of thousands of people. The root of the problem was the untrammelled power Maxwell had as chairman of his empire. The economy needs strong and dynamic entrepreneurs, with the drive and vision to create businesses. However, our publicly quoted companies should be run in a professional and trustworthy way. Seen in the light of the Maxwell fraud, the Cadbury reforms to corporate governance, which would strengthen the role of independent directors, take on a great significance.

Yet the reforms introduced after this scandal would not prevent another tyrant doing what Maxwell did. The new Pensions Act offers some protection - from next year, pension funds must be able at all times to meet the pension entitlements of members. Some members of the fund must be appointed as trustees. And if a fund

is rendered insolvent, a levy on the rest of the industry will meet its liabilities.

But these controls would not stop another Maxwell. The Government should have required appointment of an independent custodian for such pension schemes and stopped employers from playing any role in administering them. That would have removed the temptation to use pension fund assets to support the company. Similarly, the act should have insisted on much greater transparency about the way these funds are managed. Instead, the Government has endorsed the paternalistic culture of occupational pensions, which is so clearly inadequate for protecting ordinary individuals.

Against these repeated failures before and after the Maxwell scandal, the Serious Fraud Office's failure to secure convictions is relatively minor. The SFO was right to prosecute. The jurors came to their verdicts after serious thought - they took nearly two weeks to deliberate, indicating the seriousness with which they viewed their role. The case was not, as some would argue, too complicated. It did not hang on a technicality, but on whether or not the jury accepted that the defendants' word that they knew nothing of the fraud. In short, it is wrong to conclude that acquittal is a mark of the failure of ill-judged prosecution.

Could more corporate tyrants like Maxwell emerge? Yes. Could such a tyrant keep his dealings secret? Certainly. Have we done enough to protect pensioners and workers from such abuses of corporate power? Not at all. The horse is long bolted and still the stable door is swinging on its hinges.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

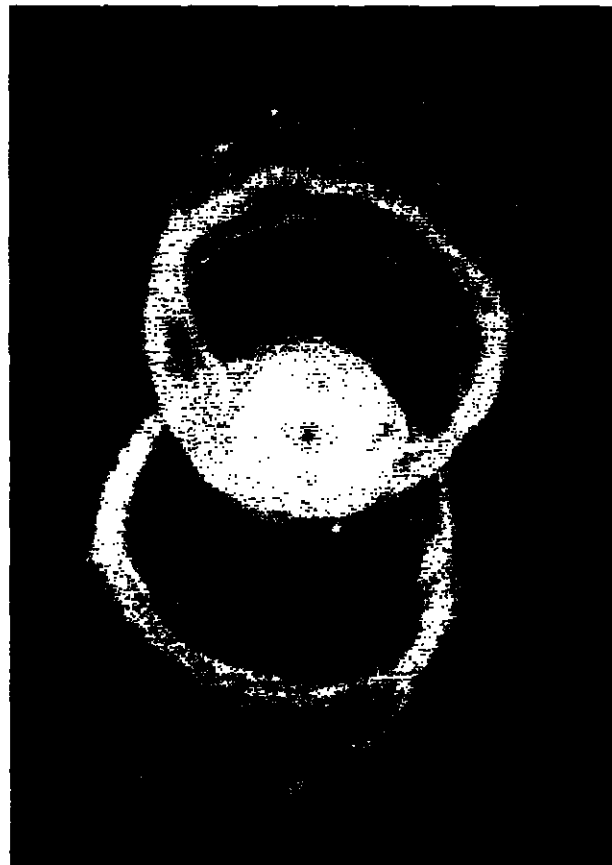
British astronomers at the final frontier

From Professor K. A. Pounds
Sir: I would like to congratulate you on the excellent coverage of several remarkable discoveries made recently with the Hubble Space Telescope ("In a faraway corner of the universe...", 18 January). Since its out-of-focus optics were corrected a year ago, the HST has begun to realise its full potential to obtain the clearest and deepest astronomical images ever seen. My present purpose is to point to the substantial role of British astronomers in the HST project. One of the two cameras on board the spacecraft was provided by the European Space Agency to a British design, while the solar arrays were built by British Aerospace. More importantly, it is far from the case that "few" British astronomers are using the HST. In fact, many of our university groups are active in HST programmes, and year-on-year the UK continues to win the largest share of HST observing time of any country outside the US. The international standing of our astronomers is an asset we must use to maximum effect in enhancing public interest in science, especially among the young. Projects such as HST, the Galileo probe to Jupiter, and the recently launched ESA missions - *Soho*, to study the Sun, and *Iso*, using infrared radiation to probe regions of star and planetary formation - can be expected to provide many exciting discoveries over the next few years.
Yours faithfully,
KEN POUNDS
Chief Executive and Deputy Chairman
Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council
Swindon, Wiltshire
18 January

am puzzled by an apparent paradox.
If the Big Bang theory is correct and the universe came into being approximately 15 billion years ago, expanding outwards from a single point, then looking back in time we ought to be seeing a very limited volume of matter and space and eventually the single point itself the nearer we get to the 15 billion year "limit". Instead of that, the picture we are presented with at an enormous distance in time and space is a huge volume of galaxies millions of light years across.
Can anyone explain the paradox, and how far do we have to

look back before we see the start of the Big Bang itself?
Yours faithfully,
LONDON PEGINGTON
Baldon, West Yorkshire
17 January

From Mr Len Clay
Sir: So, the Hubble telescope reveals 1,500 galaxies, each containing up to 100 billion stars, all streaming away from Earth at 19,000 miles per second (68,400,000 miles an hour). All I can say is, thank goodness they are not heading this way!
Yours faithfully,
LEN CLAY
Fiskerton, Newark



MyCn18, a young planetary nebula about 8,000 light years away, seen from the Hubble Space Telescope. Photograph: AP/Nasa

How to live a life

From Mr Stephen Howarth
Sir: It was very refreshing to read, among the discussions of the existence of heaven and hell, Fr Dobie's sensible and sensitive observation "I cannot and will not believe in a God who is more unpleasant than I am." (Letters, 16 January).
Something very similar was said equally well by a contented non-Christian, the antiquarian Sir William Hamilton, husband of Emma Hamilton (and probably compliant) cuckold of Lord Nelson. All his life, Hamilton used religious terms to express his personal creed, and one day distilled his tolerant wisdom into three short, memorable sentences:
My study of antiquities has kept me in constant thought of the perpetual fluctuation of everything. The whole art is really to live all the days of our life, and not with anxious care disturb the sweetest hour that life affords - which is the present. Admire the Creator, admire all His works, to us incomprehensible, and do all the good you can upon earth, and take the chance of eternity without dismay.

Amen to that.
Yours sincerely,
STEPHEN HOWARTH
Sheffton,
Nottinghamshire

Time for romance

From Mr Michael Ricketts
Sir: The Brief Encounter clock has not returned to Waterloo (photograph, 13 January). The clock (which is two-sided) has never left Carnforth station, where it has languished since starting in the 1946 classic.
Carnforth, the location for many of the station exteriors, is

no longer a romantic rendezvous, and the clock hangs forlornly, its hands frozen in time. Perhaps Railtrack will now consider restoring the Carnforth clock, and return to "Millford Junction" something of its former glory.
Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL RICKETTS
East Molesey, Surrey
13 January

Star signs

From Mr Chris Westwood
Sir: I, like Ted Draper (letter, 18 January), was intrigued by the road signs relating to Status pop groups' stories. There is another side to this, however. "Hatfield and the North" and

"Kilburn and the High Roads" (featuring the young Ian Dury, later of Ian Dury and the Blockheads fame), were groups named after road signs.
Yours,
CHRIS WESTWOOD
Leeds
18 January

Dungeon duchess

From Mr David Smith
Sir: In the event of the Duchess of York being unfortunate enough to find herself imprisoned for debt, I am sure the prison authorities would ensure she was treated in the

same way as any other inmate. However, if on temporary release - a hospital visit or to the shops - it would surely be made from a noble metal.
Yours faithfully,
DAVID SMITH
Tatfield, Kent

The West and Chechnya

From Mr Aivars Sinka
Sir: Your editorial "Chechnya is not the West's cause" (18 January) is wide of the mark. The Chechens are not a "clique", they are a nation with a common territory, history, language and religion, who are as fully deserving as the English of their own state. Moreover, they are a nation who have suffered most horribly at the hands of the Russians. The Communists wiped out half their number and encouraged them to flee their land by throwing Chechen women and children, alive, on to a burning pyre. The word "federation" implies a conscious decision to join or remain part of a common state; the Chechens have never chosen to be part of the Russian "federation".

The continued existence of the West depends upon general acceptance and affirmation of certain universal truths, among them democracy, liberty of the individual and self-determination. Stating that Chechen independence is against the interests of the West helps to undermine those universal truths.
Yours faithfully,
AIVARS SINKA
New Malden, Surrey
18 January

From Mr Malcolm Abaza
Sir: You are wrong to suggest that "Chechnya is not the West's cause" (18 January). It is of considerable importance to the West that, if Russia is to cite international law in defence of its "territorial integrity", then it must be held accountable for flouting international law with respect to human rights and the excessive use of force.

While hostage-taking by the Chechens cannot be condoned, it should be remembered that the Russians in taking Grozny killed more than 20,000 civilians (most of them ethnic Russians) with their "precision" bombing raids. To condemn the former as an "act of terrorism" while exonerating the latter as justifiable in order to maintain existing boundaries seems hypocritical.

Events in Chechnya cannot be safely ignored or swept under the carpet any more than events in the Balkans prior to 1914 could. The repercussions of the Chechens' drive for independence will play a large part in shaping the outcome of the presidential elections in Russia, and for this reason alone Chechnya should be of vital concern to the West.
Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM ABAZA
London, SW8

A blood service to be proud of?

From Mrs Eileen Chandler
Sir: Does Angela Robinson, the medical director of the National Blood Authority, really feel she "has a blood service to be proud of" (Letter, 16 January)?

I am a blood donor living in a small market town where there are many other would-be donors. Many of them, however, have no transport, and the nearest centre for donation is a 15-mile trip. The blood collection buses are on a Sunday and the buses are very few and far between, requiring long waits and large fares, which some donors simply cannot afford. Petrol, too, is expensive.

At one time we were promised that a special bus pick-up would be arranged. We waited an hour for this in drizzling rain. It did not turn up.

Most of the volunteers are busy, hard-working people. But because the centre covers such a large area, there are often long queues of people waiting to donate. Should they be expected to spend hours of their time waiting around simply because of the poor organisation of the NBA?
Yours sincerely,
EILEEN CHANDLER
Uppingham, Leicestershire
16 January

Middle-class vote

From Mr Ian Butterworth
Sir: I am somewhat mystified by the current Conservative obsession with the votes of the middle classes. I seem to recall Mr Major speaking of a "classless society".
Yours faithfully,
IAN BUTTERWORTH
Sanderstead, Surrey
18 January

Inner-city churchfare

From Mr Geoff Marsh
Sir: Among those funding branches of broad-based organisations - the social action movement analysed so well in "The rises of do-it-yourself democracy" (18 January) - Andrew Marr listed the Church of England.

In fact, it is the Church Urban Fund - an independent charity - not the church establishment that has given grants to these community-based groups in general areas of England over the past five years. Approximately £250,000 out of the total £21m that we have contributed to inner-city projects of all kinds has been directed to them.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFF MARSH
Acting Secretary
Church Urban Fund
London, SW1
18 January

Wallpaper wheeze

From Dr I. R. McLaughlin
Sir: The success of wallpaper in paste in removing old wallpaper (Letters, 13 January) does seem incredible, but there is a simple explanation.

To get paper off the wall, the old paste must be softened. You can use water to do this, but it must soak through the paper to get to the paste. Unfortunately, it runs down the wall and off the paper. Any water that does manage to wet the paper evaporates quickly. The problem reduces to one of keeping the water on the paper. Wallpaper paste itself does this, as it contains a lot of water and it sticks to the paper!
Yours faithfully,
IAN R. MCLAUGHLIN
Dursley, Gloucestershire

Complain and we'll listen

From Mr Martin O'Reilly
Sir: I am dismayed by the suggestion in your editorial "When lawyers let us down" (17 January), that dissatisfied clients should not bother to complain about their solicitors. Such language leaves consumers with the impression that they have no form of redress and ignores the thousands of cases each year that are dealt with to the satisfaction of complainants.

The survey findings were indeed disappointing and we do not view them with any level of complacency. But they need to be taken in context. The results refer to matters investigated between 18 and 24 months ago. Since that time, significant changes have been made at the Solicitors Complaints Bureau. We are committed to continuous improvement, to the fair and effective investigation of complaints and to the maintenance of standards within the profession.

The solicitors' profession cherishes its right to self-regulation and will do everything in its power to ensure that any new regulatory body is dedicated to providing a satisfactory service to all its users.
Yours faithfully,
MARTIN O'REILLY
Acting Director
Solicitors Complaints Bureau
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire
18 January

Daniel's dresser

From Mrs Anne N. McLeod
Sir: Why all the surprise about Daniel Day Lewis helping to build sets for *The Crucible* (Diary, 17 January)?

As a pupil at Bedales, woodwork was his main subject. Apparently, the Welsh dresser he made during his stay is still at the school.

He attended an interview with the furniture designer John Makepeace in 1975 with a view to being taken on as a pupil. However, he was accepted by Bristol Old Vic and the rest is history.
Yours faithfully,
ANNE N. MCLEOD
Stockport
13 January

Year-round buns

From Mr Garnet Langton
Sir: Your correspondent, Christine Smith, seems to be surprised that hot-cross buns are being sold in January (Letter, 10 January).

My wife has been buying them all the year round at Kwiksave in Bournemouth. They have a distinctive flavour which we enjoy, so why restrict them to Easter?
Yours sincerely,
GARNET LANGTON
Bournemouth
10 January

Fuel for thought

From Mr Robert Vincent
Sir: One can be sure that when the massive 9p per gallon cut in the cost of petrol is restored some time in the future after the price war, it will then only increase by a mere 2p per litre.
Yours faithfully,
ROBERT VINCENT
Andover,
Hampshire
17 January

DAVID AARONOVITCH

Femmes fatales



They're coming for Cherie Blair. The fascination with her waist-cincher and pixie boots is over. She will no longer be given marks out of 10 for the quality of her loving stare at her triumphant husband. On Wednesday she said something vaguely political and crusading, and now the knives are out.

It started with one of those younger Tory MPs for whom the term "pipsqueak" might have been invented. Nigel Evans, the red-faced renegade from Ribblesdale, accused Cherie of being the "Hillary Clinton of British politics", for having expressed a view on anti-discrimination legislation. Yesterday, the *Daily Mail* and the *Sun* took up the theme. Cherie had committed the sin of Mrs Clinton and had better watch out. Tony should take her in hand.

Before we go any further, I must make an admission: I have the hots for Hillary. She is bright, sassy, determined, witty and domineering. Like many British men, I yearn for the influence of an astrologer. Nancy examining the entrails of chickens to determine the future of arms control policy? That's okay, kinda feminine, really. Hillary brilliantly taking on a congressional committee over health reform? Dreadful. How dare she.

By the way, if I have any such feelings about Cherie, I am keeping them to myself. It would only take five minutes for an angry man to drive from Islington round to my house. One of the things I particularly admire about HRC is the fact (so derided by others) that she has re-invented herself. The wonderful emergence of the class, clear-sighted blonde butterfly from the dull, brown, myopic caterpillar is a beacon of hope in a decaying world. If I could get away with it and had \$10,000 handy, then - with help from Nicole Farhi, Clarins and a Harley Street plastic surgeon - I would look different, too.

So I'm a fan of powerful women. But many aren't. Quite the reverse. Though Cherie, as an opposition leader's wife, has remained more or less unsullied, Hillary is loathed with an extraordinary intensity by

many right-wing American men - and not a few British ones, either. Their anger seems to engulf them.

Take William Safire, veteran columnist with the respectable *New York Times*, who decided to be so incensed by a series of rather pathetic evasions and small fibs on her part that, last week, he described Mrs Clinton as "a congenital liar". This is the same Bill Safire who, 20 years ago, was a spin-doctor for Richard Nixon, the only president this century to be forced to resign (for lying).

What explains this incredible hostility? What has Hillary done to them? And what do their British counterparts fear that Cherie will do, to make such ominous comparisons? Some disingenuously claim that dislike of Hillary springs from her unelected influence on her husband. This is, as another grande dame might have it, baloney. There was no demonstration of Nancy Reagan for subjecting her husband to the influence of an astrologer. Nancy examining the entrails of chickens to determine the future of arms control policy? That's okay, kinda feminine, really. Hillary brilliantly taking on a congressional committee over health reform? Dreadful. How dare she.

So the "undue influence" argument is a smokescreen. Something else is going on to excite such gut hatred on the part of right-wing men. It isn't powerful women per se. Look how they drooled over Maggie. It's the idea of wives being overtly powerful, exercising direct influence through position and argument, rather than through wheedling and flattery. Table talk, not pillow talk. These husbands live a knife's blade away from metaphorical castration.

After all, what does it say about them if the women can hold down good jobs, bring up bright kids, and (if necessary) survive without the dubious assistance of the verbal bullies and emotional louts who title themselves as the heads of the household? That's why they're out to get you, Cherie. Add why some of us will defend you to the last. Whether you need it or not.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

You look wonderful with your clothes on - the Princess of Wales on being introduced to the *Baywatch* star David Hasselhoff.

I am middle of the road, middle brow, middle class and Middle England - Sir Christopher Blund, newly appointed chairman of the BBC's board of governors.

I am not a believer in people choosing their successors. They usually choose someone like themselves, but worse - Marnaduke Ensey, outgoing BBC chairman.

My idea of heaven is moving from one smoke-filled room to another - Peter O'Toole, actor.

Lady Thatcher can get out of a train at 5am looking as if she has just come out of the beautician's, whereas I can come out of the beautician's looking as if I have just got out of a train at 5am - Ann Widdecombe, Home Office minister.

Margaret Thatcher failed in her declared intention to wipe socialism off the agenda of British politics. Yet we find Tony Blair and New Labour wiping socialism off its own agenda - Arthur Scargill. Museums and galleries are not elitist institutions. More people visit museums than go to soccer matches - Loyd Grossman, TV presenter and chairman of the Campaign for Museums.

0171 293 2000

The lesson is, the City never learns

They knew he was rotten, but no one stopped Robert Maxwell. It could all happen again, says **Jeremy Warner**

It seems that nobody is to be held criminally liable for Britain's biggest and most dramatic post-war financial scandal, the collapse of the Maxwell empire and the plundering of more than £400m of pension assets. Although criminal charges are outstanding against a further two defendants in connection with the Maxwell affair, the Serious Fraud Office is unlikely to proceed with them after yesterday's unambiguous verdicts.

In the eyes of the law we can hold but one man responsible for one of the greatest financial crimes of the century.

Even in death, Robert Maxwell dominated the trial of his two sons, Kevin and Ian, such as he dominated and blighted them in life. It was always going to be difficult for the Serious Fraud Office to pin this great scandal on anyone but the dead tycoon. Even so, failure to target successfully anyone who could be held culpable must surely spell the

You would have thought the City might have avoided him

and for what from the start has always looked a wholly inadequate organisation.

On the one hand the SFO is accused of inability to secure convictions – such as in the case of the financial adviser Roger Levitt. On the other it is charged with abuse of power and distortion of evidence in its efforts to convict – as in the case of Asil Nadir. The SFO experiment in the investigation and prosecution of fraud has plainly not worked and it is time for the Lord Chancellor to start administering the law. Whether the jury system has also failed the nation in its search for retribution is a more difficult question to answer. That debate will rage long and hard.

It may seem bad enough that the system is unable to hold anyone to account for this shocking episode in British corporate history. Worse, however, is the thought that we may not adequately have learnt from it, either.

Maxwell and the other fraudulent collapses of the early 1990s exposed a framework of corporate governance, accounting standards and pensions regulation so weak and vague as to be almost non-existent. Since the Maxwell collapse, there has been a determined effort in government, the City and the professions to put in place new law, rules, regulations and codes of conduct that will stop such abuse happening again.

Will it work? For a time, maybe. But whatever the safeguards, when a senior executive in a position of trust and responsibility is hell bent on fraud, there is not much you can do about it.



Big Bob: Maxwell was exposed as a liar, cheat and bully – and judged unfit to run a public company – years before his death

Photograph: Brian Harris

Memories are short, particularly in the City, where reputations are as easily bought and sold as any commodity. The proof of that is Maxwell himself. Robert Maxwell was officially exposed as a liar, cheat and bully many years before the can of worms opened up by his death. In the early Seventies, Board of Trade inspectors found him unfit to be a director of a public company over a business scandal in which he displayed all the traits which led to his nemesis.

The inspectors described Maxwell as a man of great energy, drive and imagination. Unfortunately, they went on, "an apparent fixation as to his own abilities causes him to ignore the views of others if these are not compatible". The concept of a board being responsible for policy was alien to him, the inspectors said.

Maxwell regarded his stewardship duties fulfilled by displaying the maximum profit any transaction could be devised to show.

In reporting to shareholders and investors, the report concluded, he had a "reckless and unjustified optimism" which enabled him on occasions to disregard unpalatable facts and to state what he must have known to be untrue.

With the evidence of the Board of Trade before it, you would have thought the City would have avoided Maxwell like the plague. From the start, he appeared congenitally unable to understand the difference between his own and other people's money, mixing his private and public company affairs in a way that was at best highly contentious and at worst fraudulent. The evidence of this was not just malicious rumour and hearsay, as Maxwell always tried to make out; it was down there in black and white in a Board of Trade report.

For many businessmen this would have been a fatal setback. Maxwell's rehabilitation in the City is a story as remarkable as for many it is also embarrassing and unforgivable.

If there is a lesson to be had from it, it is that the City doesn't learn.

After 10 years in purdah, during which he ran a successful, but private publishing group, Pergamon, Maxwell was able to reingratiate himself with the City and once more take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the capital markets. His big break came from NatWest, which asked him to try to revive the ailing and publicly quoted British Printing. He later won plaudits for his cost-cutting measures at Mirror Group. His achievement may always have fallen a long way short of his claims, but Maxwell was none the less able to present himself once more as an industrialist and entrepreneur of talent.

While institutional investors, the people who manage our savings and pensions, always remained deeply suspicious – with some boycotting altogether Maxwell's two main publicly quoted companies, Maxwell Communications and Mirror Group – the

same could not be said of the bankers and image makers. With big commissions and fees on offer, they backed him to the hilt, funding a reckless dash for growth by acquisition from the mid-Eighties onwards. Only a few City houses refused to deal with him altogether.

Today, both commercial and investment bankers are less easily taken in by the accomplished charmer and enthusiast. This more cautious attitude may say more about the recession than Maxwell, however. Come the next boom, it is highly likely that the old loose ways will return, complete with a whole new generation of "rough diamonds" to exploit them.

But some things have become more difficult as a result of Maxwell. The pensions fraud at the heart of the affair prompted extensive pensions law reform. While these reforms did not go as far as some would like, they do make a repeat of Maxwell's thievery considerably more difficult.

Not impossible, however, for the new legislation steers clear of a key reform: a requirement that pension assets be managed by a custodian independent of the employer. With sufficiently compliant trustees and managers, it might still be possible for the over dominant executive to plunder the pension fund for his own purposes. Certainly there is nothing to stop the pension fund being required to invest heavily in the employer's own company, an abuse not confined to Maxwell during the rolling Eighties.

The other two areas of reform, accounting standards and corporate governance, again make a Maxwell sequel harder but not impossible. Audit standards and practices have largely outlawed the creative accounting techniques of the Eighties. With the number and size of negligence law suits mounting daily, including some massive

Corporate life remains one of the bastions of secrecy

ones relating to the Maxwell collapse, auditors have considerably strengthened their procedures.

Then there is the whole area of corporate governance, the way in which public companies are directed, controlled and made accountable to their shareholders. Born out of the excesses of the Eighties the Cadbury committee was already working on new codes for directors when the Maxwell scandal broke. Maxwell gave fresh impetus to the search for ways of limiting the powers of the autocratic chief executive.

As the committee found, however, devising methods of control which do not severely limit the ability of management to act swiftly and effectively in the company's commercial interests is far from easy. Companies run along the lines of a medieval fiefdom may be things of the past, but the entrepreneurially directed company is not, because the risk reward of such companies is much higher, many investors positively prefer them that way.

Furthermore, in an age of transparency and the free flow of information, corporate life remains one of the last great bastions of secrecy. The Byzantine complexity and obfuscation that characterised the Maxwell empire is still practised in many major corporations.

Maxwell was an extraordinary man and the set of circumstances that allowed him to get away with what he did, perhaps unique. But could a different version of the same thing happen again? Yes, of course it could.

PROFILE: Lord Young of Dartington

Father of the Third Age

The left's great mover and shaker is having a baby – at 80. By **Angela Lambert**

The news that a man is to father a child at the age of 80 is unusual. When that man is a well-known and respected public figure, famous for his work on family life, it is certain to provoke a good deal of press interest. When his wife is more than 40 years younger than her husband (as she is bound to be) the interest is avid.

Hence the interest this week in Lord Young of Dartington and his third wife, 37-year-old German-born Dorit Uhlenhuth, who, it turns out, is expecting their child in the summer. As Michael Young, clinical thinker, sociologist and under of more than 30 institutions, he is arguably the most effective and influential Labour over and shaker of the last 100 years, yet few could put face to his name.

Lord Young, who has made public comment so far, is said to be embarrassed by the press attention, but not in the least by the pregnancy. But then, throughout his 80 years, he has ways been an iconoclast. He introduced Dorit to his friends as the future Lady Young at his 80th birthday party at November, held at his long-term headquarters in Bethnal Green. They were married the same month in an East End church. A crown of candles was held above the bride and room as they took their vows, after which they lit sparklers and wrote their names in the air. "He did say he wanted to have another child," says a "friend", "but no one took it particularly seriously. He'll take a tremendous father. He's very good with his own children."

The coming baby means that Lord Young will have a child 50 years younger than his oldest

sibling and 35 years younger than his youngest sibling.

Michael Young was born in Manchester in 1915 to unusual, artistic and sometimes unreliable parents. His father was an Australian violinist turned music critic, his mother an actress and painter. The family moved to Australia when Michael was eight, but when his parents' marriage broke up he returned with his mother to England, to live in bohemian chaos in Chelsea. From this, and a succession of unsatisfactory schools, he was saved when he was 14 by his Australian grandfather, who offered to pay his fees to Dartington Hall, a progressive school in Devon, on condition that he learn fruit farming.

Run by Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst, who became Michael's spiritual, ideological and very nearly adoptive parents, Dartington Hall had 26 pupils, including Bertrand Russell's children. Michael was blissfully happy there. The Elmhirsts were utopian educationists, but also extremely rich and well connected. By the age of 17, Michael had stayed at the White House and dined with most of the Cabinet. Extremes of wealth and poverty were already well known to him by the time he went to the London School of Economics.

In 1939 he joined the Labour Party, and after a spell on the influential think-tank Political and Economic Planning (PEP) he became in 1945 secretary of the Labour Party's own research department, playing a major role in drafting the party's 1945 election manifesto.

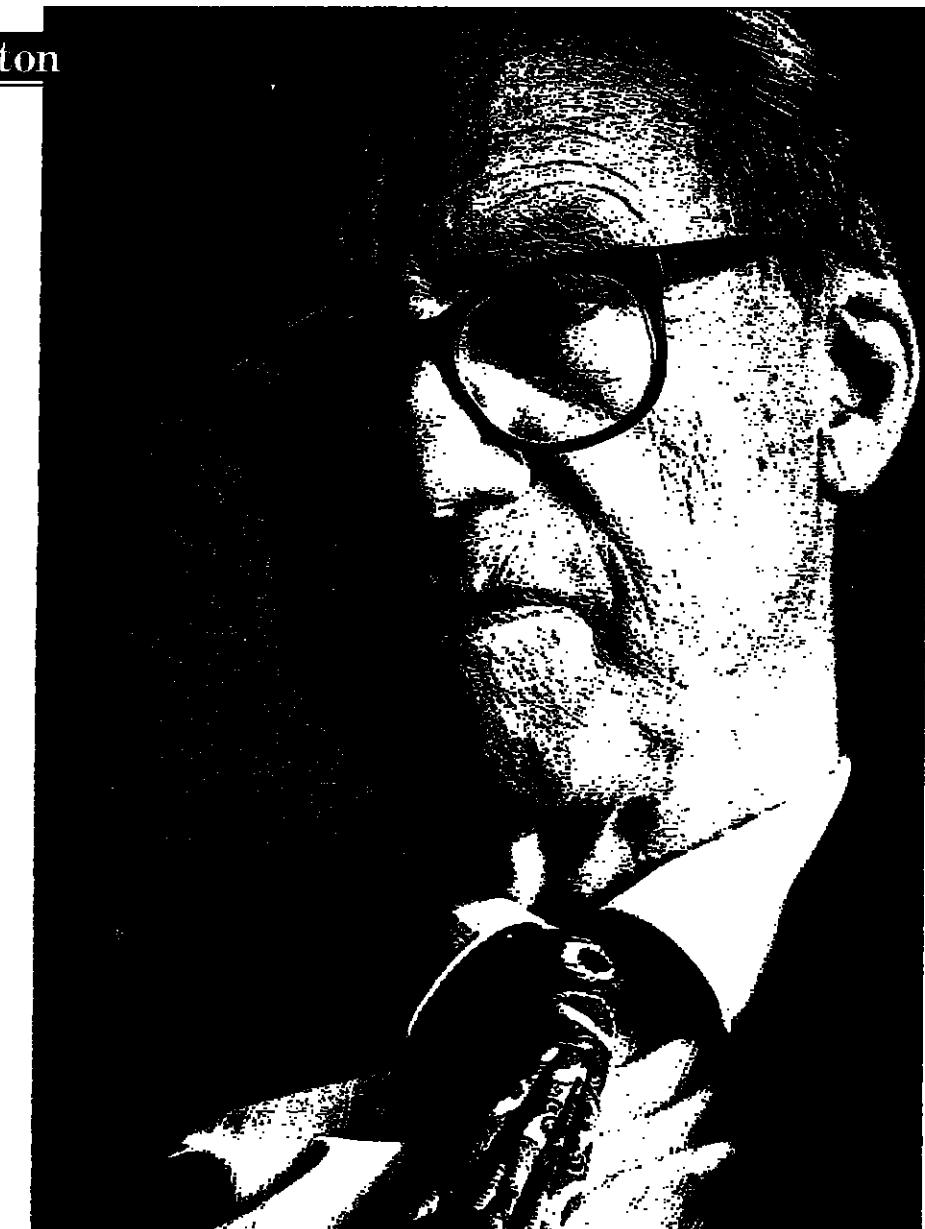
He was expected to go into Parliament but, as he later explained, "I'm not an extrovert personality and I knew I

wouldn't like a life standing on platforms making speeches." It is this lifelong reticence which accounts for the fact that he is relatively little known. But behind the scenes he has been one of the great postwar influences on left-wing thinking and social policy.

A meeting with Edward Shils, a young American sociologist, pushed him towards sociology, then a relatively new field of study. Young developed an abiding interest in non-state action and the function of communities. Out of this came his first classic and best-selling work, *Family and Kinship in East London*, written with Peter Willmott and published in 1957. Its clear, elegant jargon-free prose and vivid stories about human nature and working-class life made it both easy and fascinating to read. When critics accused him of romanticising his portrayal of East End life, Young replied, "I hope I have." The early Sixties were a time of hope, and he was one of its finest exponents. His next book, *The Rise of the Meritocracy* (1958), was to be crucial to Labour's abolition of the 11-plus exam and the rise of comprehensive education.

But the intellectual work, the writings and research are only a small part of Young's achievements. What is remarkable is the vigour and practicality with which he translates his observations and theories into projects. Somebody who worked closely with him over many years says, "He is a much-loved, admired and respected figure. He was always very good at getting his way, which meant that people sometimes got very cross with him."

A mere handful of the organisations he inspired, launched



Iconoclast: a remarkable thinker born of unusual parents

Photograph: Herbie Knott

and often headed would be: first and foremost, the Institute of Community Studies in 1953; the Consumers' Association in 1956 and *Which?* Magazine in 1957; and the Advisory Council for Education (ACE) in 1959. He was one of the great moving forces behind the foundation of the Open University in 1969.

In 1978 the then Labour Prime Minister Jim Callaghan made him a life peer. He was then 63, but any idea that he might be drifting gently towards retirement was soon proved wrong. Indeed, he confounded some of his oldest colleagues by joining the newly launched SDP in 1981, and setting up the Lawney Society, its ideological think-tank in 1982. In the same year he was one of the prime movers behind the University

of the Third Age. Then in 1987, aged 72, he founded the Open College of the Arts; in 1993 the National Association for the Education of Sick Children; and in 1994, after the death of his second wife Sasha, the National Funerals' College to promote alternative funeral services.

Recently, upon hearing that Bengali patients were dying in the London Hospital because they couldn't talk to their doctors, Lord Young started a telephone interpreting service, offering instant communication in 140 languages. There is no sign of an end to his inventiveness.

But through all his work runs one connecting thread: his belief in the value of the family. A close friend said: "His big concern nowadays is that fam-

ily life is getting to be in a bad way, especially for children. There is less stability in marriage now. The extended family is no longer as effective as it was – it's in a very shaky condition, and that's his great concern. He passionately believes in the value of the nuclear and extended family. As far as his own household is concerned, he's always tried to be a dutiful husband and father but his work and his passion to improve the world is dominant."

Nowadays Lord Young has returned to the Labour fold. Lord Longford – an even older colleague, who sits with him on the Opposition benches in the House of Lords – when told of the forthcoming baby, said characteristically, "Oh jolly good show!" And so, surely, say all of us.

He did say he wanted to have another child, but no one took this particularly seriously

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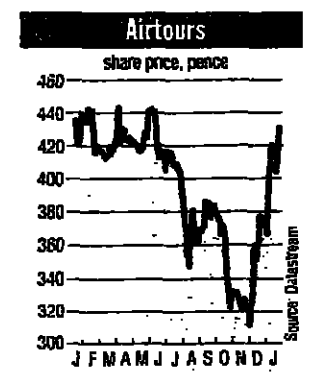
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US group eyes 30% stake in Airtours

SIMON PINCOMBE

Carnival Corporation, the world's largest cruise ship operator, is in talks with Airtours over a co-operation deal that could lead to the US tour operator buying a near-30 per cent stake in the Manchester-based package tour and holiday company.

Airtours shares - already up 36 per cent on bid speculation over the past two months - jumped a further 33p to 433p yesterday, eventually forcing an announcement from the company. Airtours said the talks "might lead to Carnival taking a stake of less than 30 per cent



in Airtours through a subscription for new shares and a partial offer to all shareholders. At yesterday's price a 30 per cent stake would be worth approximately £151m.

Airtours' directors were not available for comment yesterday. But Michael Arison, the chairman of Carnival, said he did not expect the acquisition to dilute the group's earnings per share. However, he could give no assurance that any agreement would be reached.

Carnival, based in Miami, Florida, operates the famous Holland America line as well as Windstar Cruises and about

19 cruise ships that sail to Alaska, the Caribbean, the South Pacific and the Mediterranean. It has said several times that it wants to enter the European market but its last attempt failed when a partnership with Greece's Emporiki cruise lines was terminated last April.

Airtours - which retails holidays through its 701 Going Places outlets as well as running its own charter airline - has been keen to expand outside the traditional European destinations. It now offers tours to Sweden through its Scandinavian Leisure Group and is reported to be negotiating to buy the Danish operator Spies. In 1994 it bought Sunquest Vacations in Canada, which rivals claim has been reasonably successful.

But it is Airtours' highly successful move into sea cruising - it owns two cruise ships working the Mediterranean - which is thought to have attracted Carnival's interest.

Any deal between the two companies will in reality be thrashed out between the respective chairmen who each hold large blocks of shares in their companies. David Crossland, Airtours' chairman, accounts for nearly 27 per cent of the share capital, with the board in total speaking for 33 per cent. Michael Arison, the Carnival chairman, has 10 per cent of the cruise group. The two are reported to be similar personalities who might be able to work together.

City analysts said yesterday it was impossible to take a sensible view of the announcement until the details of the prospective deal were published. "The offer to existing shareholders could form a disguised rights issue," one analyst said. While useful to fund further acquisitions, Airtours



Miami advice: David Crossland, Airtours' chairman, will be at the heart of any deal with Carnival

Photograph: Gerald Lewis

does not need the money. It has approximately £80m of debt against a market capitalisation of £450m.

Yesterday's announcement comes a month after Airtours

reported its first profits decline in eight years. Along with the other UK travel operators Airtours had a bleak year in 1995, a victim of the hot weather and a past policy of chasing mar-

ket share by slashing prices. Profits fell 22 per cent to £59m after a profits warning in August, with profit per customer crashing from £19.85 to just £9.37. The company had been

expected to lift profits from £72m to £85m.

Airtours faces a critical three months in the post-Christmas booking period. It has cut capacity for next sum-

mer by 14 per cent to 1.8 million. Bookings to date, however, are very slow.

The shares closed yesterday at 433p, up 33p on the day. Comment, page 19

Exports push car output to a 21-year high

RUSSELL HOTTEN

UK car production reached a 21-year high in 1995 due to a sharp rise in exports. Fourth quarter figures published yesterday by the Central Statistical Office show that the annual total reached 1,532 million vehicles, 4.5 per cent up on 1994.

Cars for export jumped 20.3 per cent to 744,608, though production for the home market slumped more than 7 per cent.

Ernie Thompson, chief executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said the export figures were particularly encouraging. "But the outlook for 1996 will much depend on a stimulus to domestic market output."

The figures dispelled some of the gloom that followed release of the 1995 sales numbers showing that the UK market grew by just 1.8 per cent to 1,945 million cars.

News that production is high may help to explain why the Government was so reluctant to assist the car industry by introducing "scrappage tax" in the Budget to help boost sales.

In 1974 the number of cars produced in the UK was 1,534 million, with a record 1,747 million produced in 1972. From that high point, production figures spiralled down, reaching a low point of 908,906 in 1984 before beginning a slow climb back.

The influx of Japanese manufacturers - Nissan, Honda and Toyota - led the way back, and increased productivity and quality made UK-built cars better value.

The growth in cars produced for export was helped by the fall in sterling in the first half of the year, and by efforts made by car manufacturers to escape the sluggish UK market.

But analysts warned that manufacturers risked cutting off further export growth by raising prices. According to CSO figures, car price inflation was 4.5 per cent in December, compared with the RPI rise of 3 per cent.

Ian Shepherdson, economist at HSBC Greenwell, said manufacturers had consistently forced up prices for the past two to three years. He said recent price rises, such as the Ford and Vauxhall deals, would mean further car price rises.

He said: "Several European markets remain depressed, with France and Germany possibly getting worse. Manufacturers will be selling into a shrinking market, and they will not have help from the exchange rates."

Yesterday's CSO figures showed that commercial vehicle output for 1995 totalled 233,001 - a rise of 2.28 per cent on 1994.

Unlike car production, it was the home market that was the star of the commercial side - rising 6.32 per cent while export production fell 3.32 per cent.

Railtrack to receive profits from property

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

Railtrack's flotation received a boost yesterday when the rail regulator, John Swift QC, decided that the company could keep 75 per cent of any windfall profits from property development.

The decision to allow the company to keep the lion's share of a property portfolio that some analysts estimate could be worth £2bn follows a fierce lobbying campaign by Bob Horton, Railtrack's chairman.

He argued that without a decent reward there would be no incentive for Railtrack to put effort into maximising the returns from its property, which includes a number of main stations.

Sir George Young, the transport secretary, also backed the idea of putting what Railtrack's advisers call a "property kicker" into the sale, so that the company can be marketed as a high-yielding utility with the added spice of potential property development profits.



Sir George Young: Adding spice to Railtrack's appeal

Mr Swift, who is responsible for setting Railtrack's track access charges, issued a consultation paper suggesting a three-to-one split with the rail operating companies for Railtrack's extra income from property sales.

Last year, Mr Swift intimated that Railtrack would only be able to keep a small amount of these windfall profits but he is anxious to ensure that Railtrack is attractive in the private sector. He appears to have bowed to Railtrack's arguments that the company needs to be allowed to retain a substantial proportion of the net extra income in order to encourage further sales and property development.

The sale of Railtrack's property is held for the benefit of its customers, passengers, other users of the network and shareholders. The 75:25 share of any additional proceeds would provide the most powerful incentive to develop its property assets and build a stronger business without compromising its duties to concentrate on and develop a better railway infrastructure.

Railtrack's routine property sales have already been included in Mr Swift's assessment of Railtrack's access charges and therefore the announcement only relates to unexpected or particularly lucrative sales.

Railtrack will be allowed to carry over any shortfall in previous years to offset against these windfalls. The formula will come into play once the excess income from property is more than 0.1 per cent of Railtrack's fixed-track access charges in a particular year.

Austin Reed warns of halving in profits

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Austin Reed, the upmarket clothes retailer, warned that profits in the year to the end of this month would be less than half the previous year's. Its shares, already poor underperformers over the past year, slumped a further 11p, or 7 per cent, to close yesterday at 131p.

The warning came as confirmation of the gloomy trading picture painted in October, when the company announced a fall in interim profits for the six months to August. It was the latest in a mixed bag of retail trading statements over the

past few weeks, which have seen optimism from the likes of Argos, Dixons and Boots tempered by cautious comments from Sear's, Storehouse and Bodyshop.

Colin Evans, chief executive of Austin Reed, said: "As we announced last October, our autumn season's business began rather slowly, and we expressed caution about the final outcome for the year. In our retail business, difficult trading conditions have continued during the remainder of the season, with turnover no more than level with the previous autumn."

He warned that the need to discount clothes and the lim-

gering financial impact of a badly received womenswear range had squeezed gross margins by three percentage points during the year. That would mean pre-tax profits, which reached £7.3m a year ago, would be no better than £3.5m and may be as low as £3m.

Austin Reed has run a successful womenswear business for 15 years, focused on business suits at the top end of the market. But last year it decided to target the casual market, failed to convince its customers and ended up with too much stock that it has had to discount heavily to shift.

Chris Thomson, finance di-

rector, said the womenswear ranges, under the new divisional head Susan Monks, were returning to the classic business suits on which Austin Reed made its name. He confirmed, however, that even with better-designed ranges trading remained extremely difficult.

The group's performance has also been adversely affected by the costs of a restructuring exercise in the manufacturing operation at Crew.

Despite these problems, however, the final dividend is to be maintained at 4p for the year. Even at the lower level of profitability it will be covered by earnings per share.



Finance director joins Laporte exodus

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Laporte, the chemicals group that saw its shares plunge in December after a shock profits warning, yesterday announced the unexpected resignation of Bill Hoskins, finance director. Mr Hoskins, who was on a two-year contract at an annual salary of £170,000, has agreed a severance payment of around £150,000. He could receive a

further £28,000 from exercising options at the current price. The shares dipped 2p to 661p after yesterday's announcement. It is the third blow to hit Laporte since Jim Leng, former chief executive of Low & Bonar,

took over last September. In November, Ken Minton, Mr Leng's predecessor, resigned just five weeks after moving up to the chairman's position and in the following month Laporte saw its shares crash 173p

to 610p after it announced an £85m restructuring provision and a profits warning. But Mr Leng yesterday strenuously denied that the latest news had any connection with his shake-up of the business. "I

know people will try to connect the issues, but that's not where I am coming from on them," he said. "Bill felt after Christmas that he did not want to continue and he wanted to make the break clean."

Mr Hoskins, 43, had been with the group for 13 years. Mr Minton left after 14 years as managing director and chief executive. Laporte is searching for a replacement for Mr Hoskins.

Charles Wigoder, the founder and chief executive of Peoples Phone has been ousted following the decision by the company to postpone its £150m to £200m flotation. The role of Mr

Wigoder, who has about 16 per cent of the mobile telephone services company, will be filled by his deputy, Keith Parrish, who becomes managing director.

Dollar jumps as sterling takes a beating

The dollar jumped yesterday, climbing above DM1.48 to reach its highest level against the German currency for four months, writes Diane Coyle.

The pound fell sharply, losing more than a cent in value against the dollar.

It declined to \$1.5105 from the previous close of \$1.5230 in the aftermath of Thursday's surprise base rate cut.

Sterling suffered from the

Bank of England's silence about the interest rate move, which dealers took to suggest that monetary policy had fallen victim to politics.

The dollar gained in strength in anticipation of today's meeting of G7 ministers and central bank governors in Paris.

It received a further boost from figures that suggested that the economy remained on course for a soft landing. A

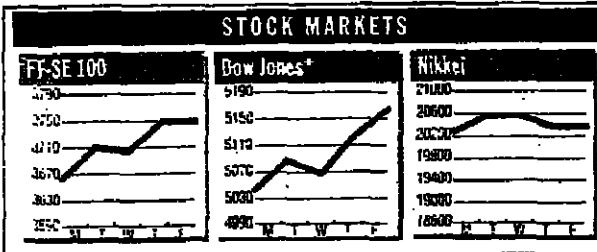
modest upward revision to GDP in the third quarter and a bigger-than-expected rise in employment last month dented hopes that the US Federal Reserve would cut interest rates as early as the end of this month.

"The market is comparing the economic fundamentals of the US and Continental Europe," Lawrence Hathaway, at investment bank UBS, said.

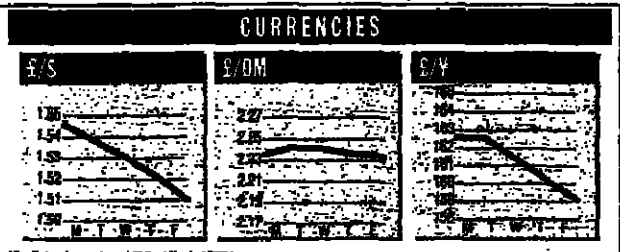
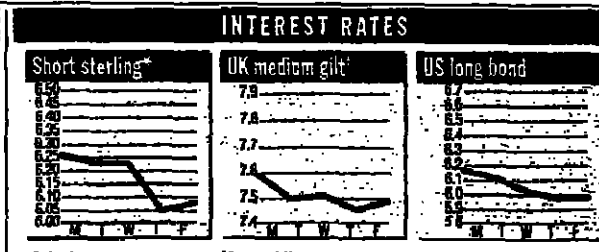
Recent figures suggesting the

German economy is slowing more sharply than expected have raised hopes the Bundesbank will cut interest rates before long. The G7 meeting is expected to welcome the dollar's strength against the mark.

Some currency dealers believe the industrial countries might co-operate to send the dollar higher - leaving it open to a setback next week if there is no official communiqué.



Source: FT Information



MAIN PRICE CHANGES					
Index	Price (p)	Change (p)	Change (%)	Index	Price (p)
Airtours	433	33	8.3	Wm Ireland Plc	353
Travelhouse	31.5	2	6.8	Medeva	245
Yorkshire-Tyne Te	759	37	5.1	Ashley (Laura)	129

OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	Yesterday	Day's change	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday
Oil Brent	17.17	-0.15	16.88	RPI	150.7
Gold	390.80	+1.85	384.1	GDP	106.5
Gold 2	264.55	+3.18	241.785	Base Rates	-6.25pc

'Independent' Money on Saturday

- Building societies: Putting up the shutters 22
- Investment: Backing Granada to win 23
- Loose change: Offers galore 24
- Green investment: Virtue with profit 25

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Minimum Opening Balance.
The Bristol & West Building Society has increased the minimum opening investment for new Select, Share, Premier Saver and Premier Plus accounts to £2,500 and Yessa Plus to £500, with effect from 18th Jan 1996. The Society has decided to make this change in line with a number of other building societies, in order to manage speculative investments and maintain a high level of service for existing members.

Amendment to Terms and Conditions.
The following amendments to investment terms and conditions have been made with effect from 18th January 1996.

Premier Saver Account.
Clause 2 of the Premier Saver Account (Issue 3) Terms and Conditions is cancelled.

Select.
The following new clause 1.5 is inserted after clause 1.4.
"The Society reserves the right, without giving any reason, to refuse any investment and shall have no liability for payment of interest until an investment has been accepted as shown in the Society's records."

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COMMENT

You can see why nuclear power failed to inspire private sector financing for a new power station: the Government will probably sell British Energy for less than the £2.5bn cost of Sizewell B.

Nuclear confidence trick will not fool investors

Nuclear power is dead, long live nuclear power. British Nuclear Fuels this week came close to calling British Energy a traitor to the cause of power from the atom by "trying to distance themselves from their heritage". The fuel processing company now sees itself as carrying the banner forward into the 21st century.

The cause of the explosion was British Energy's decision last year to abandon plans to build a new nuclear power station, ahead of the flotation in June.

Not only has an appalled BNFL offered to take over the sites at Sizewell and Hinkley that British Energy will leave empty, it has offered to organise the finance and start building new nuclear power stations itself early in the next century.

This little spat must be read on two levels. Managers in nuclear power tend to believe in their product with almost religious fervour, a reaction perhaps to spending their careers in an embattled and unpopular industry. Until last year's decision by British Energy to back away from new construction, the nuclear protagonists were remarkably successful in defending their interests. They are furious at being let down by, of all people, the senior managers of the flagship nuclear company.

The enemy was not, as once widely assumed, the environmental movement, but accountancy and economics. You can see why nuclear power failed to inspire private sector financing for a new power station: the

Government will probably sell British Energy for less than the £2.5bn cost of the newest of its stations, Sizewell B. What a bad bargain that project proved for the taxpayer.

The other argument made for nuclear power is that it is all very well saying there is a glut of cheap gas now, but it takes a decade to design and build a new nuclear station. Cheap gas will not last forever, oil prices may rise and global warming may prompt heavy taxes on fossil fuels. So we must replace old stations, as they close, with new ones, even if they are currently not economic.

Stripped of the detail, this is an argument for paying over the odds for an expensive insurance policy. This is a confidence trick the nuclear industry has pulled off on the Government for 40 years. Private investors are unlikely to give BNFL the time of day.

Home truths needed from G7 meeting

A head of today's meeting in Paris of finance ministers and central bank governors from the Group of Seven leading industrial countries, the dollar has continued to make gains against the mark. US Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, did his best to talk up the greenback by saying that a strong dollar was good for the US.

Following the success of the "orderly reversal" of the yen bubble last year, it would

be foolish to write off the ability of the G7 to target the mark. But the signs are it will prove a much tougher nut to crack.

Joint central bank intervention, notably last August, certainly brought about a sea change in sentiment towards the dollar. But the main reason for the 25 per cent depreciation of the yen since its high of last April is that the Bank of Japan opened the monetary floodgates, intervening on a massive scale to purchase dollars and driving down interest rates to a record post-war low.

In short, warm words were matched by cold deeds. The German Bundesbank could, in theory, follow suit. However, it is most unlikely to do so, since Germany is not facing a crisis of the same magnitude as threatened to engulf the Japanese economy. The German economic slowdown is serious, but it does not combine the same lethal components of debt and deflation that spelt depression.

Even so, there are worrying signs that the European slowdown could prove more stubborn and protracted than is generally anticipated. The fragility of the world economy is going to be a key feature of the G7 policy discussions – and not before time.

Despite concerns about the sustainability of the US recovery, higher-than-expected employment growth in December in the US suggests that the Fed has successfully engineered a soft landing for the US economy. Japan, too, is expected to grow by almost 2 per cent in 1996. The main problem for G7

policy-makers is the black cloud of economic weakness hanging in particular over France and Germany.

At its centre is that small town called Maastricht. The programme of fiscal retrenchment needed to comply with the deficit and debt criteria for European monetary union have pushed down demand. The obvious antidote, an easing in monetary policy, has been undertaken too gingerly to offset the shortfall in activity.

European leaders still think they can muddle through to EMU, hoping for an economic upturn that will allow compliance with the key Maastricht objective of a deficit/GDP ratio of 3 per cent or less.

But before long, the markets may decide the game is up, pouring funds into the German mark as hopes of convergence evaporate. Only when that happens will European leaders really get round to addressing the stagnation of their economies. At best, the G7 meeting will help if finance ministers from the US, Canada and Japan deliver some home truths to their European counterparts.

Carnival offer a drop in the ocean

Evidently Carnival Corporation thinks it has spotted the next big holiday trend in Europe – cruising. If it hasn't, then yesterday's announcement from Airtours of a

potential co-operation deal with the world's largest operator of cruise liners poses more questions than it answers.

For months now the Airtours share price has been driven by the prospects of a full bid from the US tour operator. News that the Americans might take a stake of less than 30 per cent had the City clamouring for hard facts.

Unless there is a hidden agenda, Airtours does not need the money (about £151m at yesterday's prices). And while Carnival has long said that it wants entry into the European market this deal looks, on the face of it, an odd way to go about it.

A straight co-operation agreement between the two companies would afford each partner no more than a drop in each other's trading ocean.

The US cruising market traditionally draws only 10 per cent of its customers from outside the US, offering a limited opportunity for Airtours. And industry specialists see difficulty in attracting Americans over in any numbers for Airtours' Greek and Spanish package deals.

Rather, the answer may lie in the success of Airtours' two cruise ships currently plying the Med.

That prompted Thomson, the market leader, to follow suit by chartering its own ships. Yesterday it reported bookings for 60 per cent of its cabins this summer. Carnival could not have had a clearer sighting of which way way the tourist fleet is heading.

Endgame: Last-ditch attempt to stave off hostile takeover dismissed by Granada

Forte set to announce White Hart hotels sale

MATHEW HORSMAN and JOHN SHEPHERD

Forte was poised last night to announce the imminent sale of its White Hart hotel chain for £125m in a last-ditch effort to see off the hostile £3.9bn bid from Granada.

Industry sources said the negotiations were at an advanced

Who backs whom

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Kleinwort Benson Granada
Lehman Brothers Forte
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NatWest Securities Granada
Nikko Securities Forte
Nomura Granada
Paribas Granada
Parnure Gordon Granada
Paribas Forte
Sutherland & Partners Forte

stage and that confirmation could come over the weekend.

A Forte spokesman said: "It is our stated intention to sell the White Hart chain. We do not comment on market rumours. Any announcement will be made through the appropriate channels at the appropriate time."

An attempt to sell the 72 White Hart hotel properties failed last year when the two sides could not agree over price. A management group is believed to be favoured as buyer.

One analyst said a price of £125m was at the high end of estimates, and could provide Forte with support in its bid to remain independent.

But most observers continued to believe that Granada had the edge. "It will take more than one deal at this late stage to swing the odds in Forte's favour," one analyst said.

Granada dismissed the prospect of a White Hart sale. "No doubt Sir Rocco has a few rabbits to pull out of his hat,"



Backs against the wall: (from left to right) Keith Hamill, Sir Rocco Forte, and Sir Anthony Tennant, preparing for the final act of the Granada takeover drama next week

Charles Allen, chief operating officer of Granada, said: "But if they do anything at all, they will be selling with their backs up against the wall."

There was also speculation that Whitebread would announce an increased bid for Forte's restaurants and budget hotels, which is dependent on the failure of Granada's offer. The current price, £1.05bn, could be raised by as much as 20 per cent and still be earnings-enhancing, informed sources suggested.

Peter Jarvis, Whitebread's chief executive, is scheduled to meet Carol Galley, head of

Mercury Asset Management, on Monday. MAM is the largest shareholder in Forte and Granada, and is also a large owner of Whitebread shares.

Ms Galley discussed the bid with Gerry Robinson, Granada's chief executive, yesterday morning, while Sir Rocco Forte, Forte's chairman, met her in the afternoon. MAM is widely seen as holding the swing vote.

Meanwhile, Granada received the support of one of the City's leading independent houses, Kleinwort Benson, which recommended the cash-and-shares offer. Analysts Paul

Slattery, Greg Feehely and Michael Savage said: "There is less risk for Forte shareholders in accepting the immediate value on offer from Granada."

Kleinwort Benson suggested before Christmas that Forte was worth about 380p a share. Since then, the strength of Granada shares has lifted the value of its bid to about 386p a share. But the analysts warned that Granada's bid, including £50m paid to the Council of Forte and £300m in "potential loss of value on asset disposals," raised the bid costs to about £1 per Granada share.

BNFL pledges to revive nuclear power industry

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

State-owned British Nuclear Fuels has made a surprise pledge to revive nuclear power in Britain and may take the lead role in seeking the billions of pounds needed for new generating stations, it emerged last night.

Addressing a meeting of nuclear engineers, BNFL's chief executive, Neville Chamberlain, openly attacked the Government – its shareholder – as "parochial and short-sighted" for refusing to support further nuclear plants.

Mr Chamberlain's outburst will throw into confusion the current debate over the nuclear industry in the UK, which will come under the spotlight again next week when the Trade and Industry Select Committee continues its inquiry into the privatisation of British Energy, the main UK producer of nuclear energy.

The mission from BNFL follows the recent decision by British Energy to abandon plans for two new reactors at Sizewell and Hinkley. Mr Chamberlain said: "Other players are trying to distance themselves from their heritage. It is clear that BNFL now is the nuclear industry in the UK."

Martin O'Neill, chairman of the Select Committee, said last night that BNFL's stance could affect the privatisation as an expanding state-owned nuclear generator could become a com-

petitive threat. "I would want to hear whether BZW and other advisers have views on this," he said.

Mr Chamberlain said: "Recent events have shown that if there is to be new investment BNFL may need to lead rather than support and we are prepared to do that."

Mr Chamberlain also said BNFL may ask to inherit the sites that had been earmarked at Sizewell and Hinkley for new plants. The company is already set to become a significant generator.

A spokesman for BNFL said that while the company's role as a direct investor might be limited, it would be prepared to lead the way in negotiating with the international banking and nuclear communities. BNFL, which is primarily a nuclear fuel services company, already has substantial cus-

tomers and connections overseas.

Although BNFL is owned by the Government, it is established as a plc and has certain freedoms to make investment decisions and operate as a commercial company. It has in recent years been heavily marketing its services in the US, Asia and Europe and is now among the UK's leading exporters.

Mr Chamberlain also warned that BNFL will demand assurances from the Government over the funding of the multi-billion-pound liabilities for the Magnox plants.

He said that Magnox would be set up as a separate subsidiary, Magnox Electric, which would be a "separate unit from all of BNFL" and would not include BNFL's two existing power plants.

Mr Chamberlain said: "As an international company seeking to penetrate new markets around the world, our credibility is influenced by the health or otherwise of our balance sheet and we cannot have that distorted by liabilities attached to Magnox Electric. As a plc, BNFL cannot take on a net liability and we shall be discussing with the Government in some detail how this aspect is to be handled."

Mr O'Neill said that the decision not to integrate Magnox Electric made a nonsense of the Government's arguments that it would create synergies by giving the reactor family to BNFL.



Nuclear outburst: Neville Chamberlain of BNFL

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Lloyd's funds stay buoyant

The recent news from Lloyd's of London has not been guaranteed to gladden the hearts of investors in Lloyd's funds, the investment trusts set up to allow limited-liability investment in the insurance market. In recent months Lloyd's has not only lost its head of regulation, Rosalind Gilmore, but its chief executive, Peter Middleton, as well. Meanwhile, concerns are mounting over the continuing slippage of plans to establish Equitas, the reinsurance "dustbin" into which it is intended that all the problems of the past be swept.

Despite all this gloom, shares in the Lloyd's funds seem to have maintained the buoyancy the *Independent* identified last August. The index compiled by the broker UBS in our illustration, which covers the original businesses floated in 1993, is standing at levels not seen for a year. Yet the discount to net assets, at 8.8 per cent, has seldom been wider, suggesting now may be a good time to dive in.

The problem for would-be investors in Lloyd's funds is the lack of up-to-date information. Yesterday's figures from Abrust Lloyd's Insurance Trust illustrate the point. While the company recorded a rise in profits from £606,000 to £689,000 in the six months to September, almost

all of that surplus comes from the investment of the proceeds of its flotation at 100p in November 1993.

Much more important will be the underwriting results derived from the syndicates in which Abrust has invested. The 1994 figures will not be known until 1997 under Lloyd's three-year accounting rule. But returns made by the syndicates' managing agents suggest that gross underwriting profits will be between 8.3 and 13.3 per cent of Abrust's £38.3m premium business written or "capacity" in 1994.

With UBS forecasting a 1994 result of 12.4 per cent, Abrust looks on course to produce one of the better results in the sector. Even so, unchanged at 80p, the shares are not necessarily the best value in the sector. Taking account of three potential outcomes, ranging from Lloyd's going bust to it again achieving long-term gross returns of 10 per cent, UBS tips Angerstein, CLM, HCG and Limit as being particularly undervalued.

Before investors jump, however, they should beware. Apart from the specific problems of Lloyd's, insurance rates have peaked and 1995 results are likely to show a fall on the £1bn expected for 1994. Meanwhile, capacity at Lloyd's is

forecast to be down only around 3 per cent to £9.9bn in 1996, putting further pressure on rates.

Resolving the generator riddle

More than a million investors in last year's £4bn share issue by the generators National Power and PowerGen are making up their mind whether to send off the second of three instalments or cut their losses on what has been a dismal investment.

PowerGen's partly-paid shares are currently trading at 200p compared with the 180p first instalment. National Power, at 141p, is 29p below the 170p shareholders put up last year.

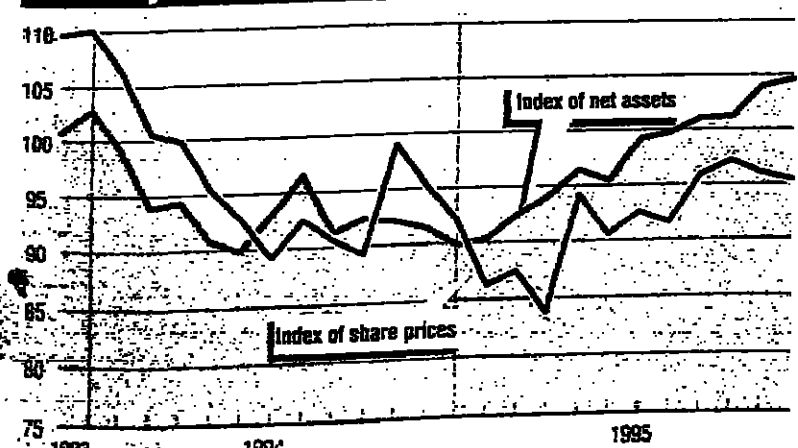
The basic payment for the second slice is 170p for National Power shares and 185p for PowerGen. Anyone who opted for discounted shares at the time of the first instalment will pay 160p on the first 480 National Power shares and 175p on the first 320 PowerGen.

So what should they do? There are three options: pay up, sell the partly-paid shares in the market or do nothing. The last of these is not recommended as the Treasury will simply take back your shares, sell them in the market at a possibly unfavourable price and charge you the costs of doing so.

Whether you put more money into either company depends on the view you take of their cloudy prospects. Their future performance depends largely on ongoing MMC inquiries into their stalled bids for Midlands Electricity (PowerGen) and Southern Electric (NP). The result will not be known until March so to a large extent this is a blind investment.

That said, a favourable MMC result would be good news for the shares. A compromise solution is to sell enough in the market to fund the call on the rest. That way you maintain an exposure without committing any more money.

Lloyd's funds: how they have performed



IN BRIEF

Goldman Sachs may opt for float

New York – The 174 general partners of Goldman Sachs gather for an annual get-together in a country-club resort hotel outside New York City today amid intense speculation that the bank may shortly opt to sell itself to the public, writes David Osborne.

Analysts predict that a prompt flotation could raise funds equal to 2.5 or even three times the book value of the bank. At issue is whether the bank, founded in 1869 by Marcus Goldman, can remain competitive with a capital base estimated at \$5bn, that is both expensive relative to those of its competitors and inherently volatile. An exodus of more than 30 partners in the wake of the 1994 profits collapse threatens to shrink its base by as much as 10 per cent.

Fokker set to seek link with rivals

The owner of Fokker may seek an alliance with European rivals rather than place the ailing Dutch plane-maker into liquidation. As the company's financial crisis deepened last night, Germany's Daimler-Benz Aerospace sought talks with Aero International Regional, a joint venture between British Aerospace, Alenia and Aerospaciale. Wim Kok, the Dutch prime minister, said yesterday that Fokker's future looked bleak after the government and DASA failed to agree a £1.2bn (£800m) refinancing.

Store conversions boost Somerfield

Operating profits at the supermarket group Somerfield rose 52 per cent to £44.9m in the six months to November with turnover growing fast in stores that have been converted from the Gateway fascia. Pre-tax profits increased from £16.8m to £24.2m. More than half the group's selling space has now been converted to trade as Somerfield. Like-for-like sales growth at 5 per cent was comparable with the industry average.

BA drops USAir investment option

British Airways confirmed yesterday that it will not be exercising an option to invest another \$200m this year and \$250m by 1998 in USAir. A stalemate in the Anglo-US aviation talks meant BA could not have raised its current 24.6 per cent shareholding above 25 per cent. A BA spokesman said: "We have allowed the option to lapse but will continue to seek a relaxation of restrictions on foreign ownership of USAir. Bob Ayling, BA's chief executive, will next week replace Sir Colin Marshall as one of the UK airline's three directors on the USAir Board."

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
BT Group (Q)	82.2m (50.9m)	4.35m (3.6m)	3.82p (3.30p)	nil (1.7p)
British Household (Q)	2.1m (1.8m)	-0.15m (-0.21m)	-3.8p (-5.4p)	nil (nil)
Centrica (Q)	28.1m (29.1m)	0.05m (0.11m)	0.35p (0.43p)	1p (1p)
LPA Industries (P)	5.72m (5.21m)	0.61m (0.62m)	4.36p (4.30p)	0.88p (nil)
NITE Group (Q)	72.1m (60.2m)	2.55m (1.85m)	6.5p (4.9p)	1.8p (1.3p)
Park Food Group (Q)	21m (18.7m)	-5.7m (-5m)	-1.1p	1.1p (1.0p)

(P) - Profit (Q) - Quarterly (R) - Nine months



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CANAL WHARF

Every day 5pm & 9pm - Weekend omnibus

LIVETV

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24HR CABLE

D-MARK	
1 month	3 months
0-3	0-5
25-26	73-70
48-40	25-26
65-72	33-35
47-46	34-31
2-4	5-8
57-47	15-10
60-70	10-12
3-5	57-55
4-5	8-10
35-30	10-10
9-12	100-117
159-183	440-490
33-37	113-108
9-21	54-58
8-12	5-35
4-14	90-90
30-32	85-90
4-30	9-14
	108-15

Country	Starting	Dollar
England	128,555	85,000
France	103,817	1,3850
Sweden	31,700	342,58
Philippines	289,033	281,90
Portugal	231,018	52,54
Spain	54,495	56,421
South Africa	709,598	498,00
U.S.	1,536,986	35,465
Yugoslavia	41,437	27,490
Y.R.E.	5,550	367,31

*Subtract from spot rate; these quoted low to avoid no requirements. For the latest rates, see per minute (phone call) daily other areas.

It Says	
U.S. and Zealand (Dollars)	2,2900
Yugoslavia (Yugoslavia)	8,5000
Portugal (Escudo)	226,0000

70,000	Spain (Paris)	20,000
60,000	Sweden (Stockholm)	20,000
230,000	Switzerland (Zurich)	17,000
160,000	Turkey (Istanbul)	883,000
0.0375	United States (Dallas)	1,400

Account	0.75%	Japan Discount	0.50%
Funds	5.25%	Switzerland Discount	3.00%
Gain	5.44%	Central Control	3.47%
Day Repo	9.25%	Switzerland Discount	15.0%
no fee	8.75%	Lombard	4.125%

country	9yr	yield %	10yr	yield %
Australia	9%	4.54	9.9%	5.81
Canada	12.4%	8.88	10.5%	6.50
Italy	10.76%	8.57	10.1%	5.81
Japan			9.1%	6.28

	1%	2%	5%	7%
CU OUT	97%	135	77%	589

Based on local basis. ** Denotes raw benchmark.

	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
6%	6%	6%	6%
6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
6 1/2	6 1/2	-	6 1/2
6 3/4	-	-	-
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73 3/4	73 3/4	73 3/4	73 3/4
74	74	74	74
74 1/4	74 1/4	74 1/4	74 1/4
74 1/2	74 1/2	74 1/2	74 1/2
74 3/4	74 3/4	74 3/4	74 3/4
75	75	75	75
75 1/4	75 1/4	75 1/4	75 1/4
75 1/2	75 1/2	75 1/2	75 1/2
75 3/4	75 3/4	75 3/4	75 3/4
76	76	76	

0	9411	19362	76702
1		0	0
2	9538	26128	176661
3	9538	1045	8423
4	9557	123	4908
5	9834	3971	25035
6	3750	12465	63761
7	40750	18	3363
8	9009	13463	42193

ption

er price		Call/Put
3750	3800	Total/Vots
5138	295	--
5374	0/64	--
5765	53/64	--
5785	74/163	--

Volume	LME Stocks	chg
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35098	630000	-	6675
875	63000	-	340
44021	340000	-	4325
5200	190000	-	2205
2770	40750	-	300
3078	188000	-	3550
54			
10540		Stock volumes & change in turnover as at Friday 15 January	

	\$	£	\$	£
KS	275	Kruglands	3914205	25.8 07
MS	67	Wien	92397	61.64
JA	59	Nachle	40207	27.01
60	33	Mapple Leaf	40275	256.75
		(Source: Spink & Son)		

Estates	Prices
£ Shorne	A £ Shorne
19750	Jan 306
220000	Apr 213
20500	Jun 326
1,041	Nov 1,041
Cost	Cost
	1,790 Price

Station	CROT*	Cont./bushel
12/76	H-L0	Sent
12/25 Mar	36900-35700	364.00
12/60 May	36350-36100	362.00
7/29 Jun	35820-35750	359.50
Source: CME		
Soy Gals	F/L00kg	89.25
Coastal Oil (1)	Stewes	700.00
Southwest Oil	Stewes	616.00
Reprocessed Oil	F/L00kg	86.25
Groundnut Oil	Stewes	69.25
* European Source: FT Information/Pactera		
WTI	Products 1	(\$/bushel)
Spain	Spot Crk West North Europe	67.63
Apr	9005 Landed Gasoline	156.83
Apr	1791 Naphtha	156.83
May	1750 Ec Gasoil	156.86
June	739 Heavy Fuel Crk	30.00
Source: CDS-London Oil Reports 10 days prices		

Dec 31st	% Yr to date	% Yr to date	% Yr to date
22,540	-779	179,24	-4,629
281,79	-2,71	244,89	-8,253
7,33	-13,7	5,92	-3,08
10,132	-5,01	227,29	-6,22
182,71	-3,81	187,61	-4,56
429,56	-3,29	448,61	-3,52

of Goldman Sachs & Co. YClose as of 12 Jan 96

Income Funds

	Dec 31st	% Yr to date	% Yr to date
Am Gen Life Mgmt	56,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Bond	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser A	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser B	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser C	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser D	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser E	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser F	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser G	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser H	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser I	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser J	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser K	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser L	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser M	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser N	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser O	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser P	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser Q	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser R	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser S	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser T	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser U	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser V	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser W	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser X	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser Y	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser Z	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AD	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser AZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BD	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser BZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CD	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser CZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DD	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser DZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser ED	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser ER	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser ES	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser ET	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser EZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FD	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser FZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GD	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GE	36,3	10,7	10,7
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Am Managed Income Bond Ser GI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser GZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HD	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser HZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser ID	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser II	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IX	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IY	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser IZ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JA	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JB	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JC	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JD	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JE	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JF	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JG	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JH	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JI	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JJ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JK	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JL	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JM	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JN	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JO	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JP	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JQ	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JR	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JS	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JT	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JU	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JV	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JW	36,3	10,7	10,7
Am Managed Income Bond Ser JX			

[illegible]

33 Main Key to Project
 Project 33 Main Key to Project
 Project 33 Main Key to Project

sport

Fighting memories of death

The last time Drew Docherty fought, his opponent died. Tonight he goes back into the ring for the first time. James Reed asks others who have experienced it what it will feel like

Men who kill in the ring never forget. They never forget the final punches that led to a fellow boxer's collapse or the final words they spoke to their opponent before he disappeared and collapsed. The one thing that they are never allowed to forget is that they were in the opposite corner when so-and-so fought for the last time.

Docherty's comments have an eerie familiarity about them

Tonight in Mansfield Drew Docherty will fight for the first time since his encounter with Jim Murray last October. Murray collapsed and was counted out with just 34 seconds of the final round left but 24 hours later he was dead.

Docherty insists that he thinks of Murray every day and there are other boxers like Barry McGuigan and Alan Minter who have never stopped thinking about the men they met who subsequently died.

"I don't look at it like I killed a man. To me I was just out there getting a living and he was just out there trying to get a living. It was a right hard fight and going into the 12th both my eyes were closed and I had trouble seeing but I just tapped him and he went down," Minter, the former undisputed world middleweight champion, said.

In 1978 Minter won the European middleweight championship by stopping the Italian Angelo Jacopucci in round 12. After the fight the boxers met at a restaurant and shook hands, embraced and had a few drinks. Later that night Minter left the restaurant and remembers seeing Jacopucci. "He was leaning over a bridge spewing up, but I thought he'd just had too much to drink," Minter said.

The following morning Minter found out the Italian was in a coma and shortly afterwards he died. "I was gutted. I couldn't



Drew Docherty carries the burden of his last fight with him when he challenges Daniel Jimenez for his world title tonight

even speak. But there is one thing and I'm not bragging, but I wanted Jacopucci's children to be able to say that their dad lost to a champion and not just some mug," said Minter who won the world title 18 months later.

In 1982 young Irish fighter McGuigan was on his way to a world title when he met Young Ali in central London. McGuigan, now a commentator, remembers the harrowing night. "The venue was silent, there were just hundreds of men drinking coffee and watching when we got in the ring.

When I hit him on the bridge of the nose I saw his eyes go," McGuigan said.

All died two days later from a massive blood clot. McGuigan is still suffering. Three years later McGuigan won the world title when he outpointed Eusebio Pedraza over 15 rounds. The celebrations after the fight were terrific but Barry was crying. "I dedicated this fight to the young lad who died when we fought in 1982," wept the newly crowned world champion. It was a gut-wrenching moment. "I really didn't want to box

again. I felt so guilty. It was so hard for me because it had been me who'd thrown the punch. So, of course, it was my fault," McGuigan said.

The British super-bantamweight champion Ricky Winterton is still blaming himself for the death of Bradley Stone after their title fight in April 1994. "Who else is to blame? It was me hitting him, nobody else just me," Winterton said.

In Winterton's first fight after beating Stone he finally turned away and was stopped. "I kept seeing Bradley's face and I couldn't take it," he said at the time. However he has since defended his British title and two weeks ago contacted Docherty to encourage the Glasgow-based boxer to continue. "I told him to remember that time is a great healer," Winterton said.

Docherty knows that tonight's fight will not be easy. Jimenez is a champion of quality, but it is obvious that the Puerto Rican is only part of the problem: it is clear that the memory of Murray will be with Docherty when he walks from the changing-room to the ring this evening.

Kernen heads Swiss sweep

Skiing

Swiss skiers swept the podium at the World Cup event in Veysonnaz, Switzerland, yesterday, banishing the disappointment of a two-year barren patch in the men's downhill. Bruno Kernen came from nowhere to clinch his first World Cup victory, ahead of three other Swiss team-mates.

The 23-year-old Swiss beat William Besse by one hundredth of a second in 2min 3.14sec on an ice-packed 3,500m course. Third place was clinched by Daniel Maher in 2:03.39, and Xavier Gigandet took fourth in 2:03.60.

It was the first top-four victory in World Cup skiing since a 1990 giant slalom in Alta Badia won by four Austrians, and the first for the Swiss since 1987 in Mount Allen. Coincidentally, Maher also came third there.

It will, however, have little impact on the World Cup standings. Norway's Lasse Kjus still leads overall with 956 points despite his injury at Kitzbühel. In second place is Michael von Grünigen of Switzerland with 690, and the Italian Alberto Tomba lies third with 616 points.

The young Swiss, who was not even picked for the team at the

start of the season, made the best time in test runs and kept his form for the race, carving a flawless run down the renowned Bear Course.

"Actually I only wanted to be the best Swiss," he admitted. "I knew I was going at the end and I knew I had to take many risks. I took a very direct route and it worked."

Kernen came 10th at Kitzbühel and his previous best downhill results were two fifth positions here in Veysonnaz and in Kvitfjell in 1993.

Besse, the downhill winner in Wengen, Switzerland, and in Vail, Colorado, in 1994, thought he had clinched victory when he recorded 2:03.15 to take the lead after 21 descents. He had a tense wait until Kernen, racing 30th, beat him by just a hundredth of a second.

Fifth place was taken by the Canadian Brian Stannell, in 2:03.73. Kyle Rasmussen, of the United States, had his best run this season, finishing sixth with 2:03.83, 0.69 seconds behind the winning time.

The winner of last week's downhill at Kitzbühel, Austria, Günther Mader, came in 25th with 2:04.74. Luc Alphand, of France, the leader of the downhill World Cup standings, finished in a disappointing 22nd place, with 2:04.63.

Saints look to future

Rugby League

Brian Cese and John Myler will remain in charge of St Helens for the match that will decide third place in the Stones Centenary Championship tomorrow, as their club wait for a work permit for their new coach.

Shaun McRae, whose credentials include assisting Bob Fulton on two Kangaroo tours, is now expected to arrive from Australia on Monday, by which time Saints could have underlined the progress made under the sacked Eric Hughes by finishing behind only Wigan and Leeds in this last winter season. Halifax stand in their way and Leeds will not be helped by the likely absence of Paul Newlove with a recurrence of his foot injury, as well as the suspended Scott Gibbs. Halifax's recent form has defied their own injury toll, with young players like Craig Dean and Chris Chester performing far better than any one had the right to expect. Dean, 19, has played admirably in the scrum-half role left vacant

by Wayne Parker, but the most startling impact has been made by the 17-year-old Chester, who has been playing with astonishing poise and maturity.

Halifax will hope to take advantage of Saints' upheavals. The finish third with the depleted squad Steve Simms has had at his disposal will be a most encouraging sign for the Super League season that lies ahead.

Halifax will have their prop Wayne Jackson available. He has been found guilty of the punching offence for which he was sent off against Warrington last week.

The Wigan captain, Shaun Edwards, will face a disciplinary committee next week following Bradford Bulls' complaint over a tackle that left their scrum-half, Robbie Paul, concussed.

Leeds, Wigan's opponents tomorrow, will be without their prop, Harvey Howard, whose appeal against a two-match ban for a high tackle failed yesterday. James Lowes switches to scrum-half, with Mick Shaw starting at hooker in a game that will have an inevitable air of 'what might have been' for Leeds.

Three cautionary tales: Living with the echoes of a nightmare



'I really didn't want to box again. It was so hard for me because it was me who'd thrown the punch. It was my fault'

Barry McGuigan



'I was just out there getting a living and he was just out there trying to get a living... I was gutted. I couldn't even speak'

Alan Minter



'Who else is to blame? It was me hitting him, nobody else just me... I kept seeing Bradley's face and I couldn't take it'

Ricky Winterton

WEEKEND FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK

TODAY

Football
Matches not on pools coupons:
3.0 unless stated
FA CUP TROPHY FIRST ROUND: Aston United v Burnley; Sporn: Bognor Regis v Worcester; Boston Utd v Orono; Bromsgrove v Belper; Bury v Bolton; Colchester v Ipswich; Dagenham v Notts; Exeter City v Plymouth; Gillingham v Notts; Grimsby v Notts; Huddersfield v Notts; Lincoln City v Notts; Luton v Notts; Mansfield v Notts; Millwall v Notts; Notts

sport

Bosnich beavers away at second five-year plan

Phil Shaw talks to Aston Villa's Australian import, who has added consistency to his unruffled flair to become one of the Premier League's most distinguished goalkeepers

Mark Bosnich was arguably the only beneficiary of Eric Cantona's "kung-fu" leap at Selhurst Park a year ago next week. He now practises the martial arts himself, a coincidence that may not surprise those Tottenham supporters who already see him as a Bruce Lee among Premier League custodians.

The night Cantona went over the top, Aston Villa's Australian international goalkeeper charged out of his area in a bid to beat Jürgen Klinsmann to the ball. Although his knee caught the Spurs striker on the head and laid him out, Bosnich largely avoided trial by television because of the fall-out from south London.

As Villa prepare for tomorrow's return by Spurs, who these days are sadly without the great German, Bosnich admits he might have been "slaughtered" by the media and authorities but for *l'affaire Cantona*. His own challenge was at worst invidious: no foul was given. Yet it was symptomatic, along with a later sending-off at Leeds, of a turbulent season.

Villa avoided relegation only on the final day. The contrast with the current campaign, in which they stand seventh and meet Arsenal in the Coca-Cola Cup semi-finals, could hardly be more pronounced. With Bosnich allying consistency to his undoubted agility, they have conceded fewer goals (15) than anyone in the four divisions except Gillingham.

He has kept 13 clean sheets, eight of them in League games (the same number as leaders Newcastle), and has still to be beaten in 1996. "I'm much steadier now," he said, "far more mature, more in control than I was."

Contrary to his image – the Villa manager Brian Little recently labelled him "phenomenal", "daft as a brush", "intelligent" and "extrovert" in the same answer – Bosnich likes "to have things organised" as he puts it.

The contradictions run deeper. He has been portrayed here as a stereotypical Aussie, but in his native Sydney he was very much a Croatian and endured racial abuse because of it. He is also depicted as some kind of beach bum in Brun, whereas he has been in England for all but six months during the past eight years and confesses that he could never surf anyway.

In fact, Bosnich takes his craft very seriously. Three afternoons a week he trains on his own. He also does martial arts to improve his balance, reflexes and flexibility. And then there are the five-year plans.

"My first was from when I was 16.21 (he reached 24 last Saturday). I gave myself five years to break into first-team football. The next five was to

make myself the best keeper in the country I'm playing in. The five after that is to become recognised as one of the world's best. Then from 31 to 36 or whatever, just to enjoy it all."

At school, Bosnich excelled at rugby league and cricket before coming under the wing of a specialist goalkeeping coach at the age of 12. Friday was English football night on Channel 2 – "a ritual for me" – and he was soon poring over videos of Shilton, Clemence, Jennings and Banks.

On the back of a holiday in the former Yugoslavia he was invited for a trial by Liverpool. Kenny Dalglish was keen but, as Bosnich completed his studies, Manchester United stepped in promising to untangle the red tape holding up his progress.

The work permit did not materialise. After three appearances for United, he drifted back Down Under. He was helping his father to install swimming pools when Ron Atkinson, having placated the Home Office, took him to Villa Park. "If Ron

'I felt like I'd let Ron down. A manager can only do so much, but it's up to the players once they cross that white line'

hadn't come in for me I'd probably be if not a waster, just stuttering along," he said.

Success followed quickly, maybe too quickly. An incredible series of penalty saves – one from Bebeito, another from Ian Wright, one in a Birmingham derby, three in a shoot-out with Tranmere and two against Spurs in the next game – led to Atkinson hailing him as "the best young keeper in the world". When he helped Villa beat United in the Coca-Cola Cup final, Bosnich had just turned 22.

With hindsight, it was then that things started to sour. Because of the three foreigners rule, he was left out against Internazionale in the Uefa Cup. "I look that much worse than I should have done," he recalled. "I also forgot that I actually had to work hard, that the magic didn't come like that (snaps fingers)."

He began making bizarre blunders. At QPR he ventured upfield to clear, as if trying to operate a lone offside trap, and ended up gifting a goal. Within weeks Atkinson was sacked, and Bosnich's natural ebullience took a further blow. "I felt I'd let Ron down. A

manager can only do so much, but it's up to the players once they cross that white line. I knew that I hadn't been 100 per cent, particularly in my concentration levels. My preparation wasn't what it should have been."

"I may have played Jack the Lad a bit. As we saw with the Paul Merson thing, it's so easy to be sucked into some bad crowds. Though I didn't go to that extreme, there were times when I thought to myself: 'Hey, what are you doing here at this time of night?'"

Little, a Holte End idol of another era, also needed to re-establish his credibility with the Villa crowd. He and his coaches spent the summer working on a three-man defence (Bosnich has dubbed Ugo Ehiogu, Paul McGrath and Gareth Southgate "the Rocks"). So effective has the formation proved that Southgate now plays for England, while Ehiogu and the wing-back Alan Wright will join him at Terry Venables' get-together next week.

Bosnich, who would surely have been with them if his loyalties did not lie elsewhere, argues that Villa are one of the few teams who understand how to play the system. "I saw Manchester United try it at Sunderland the other night, and they struggled. The Rocks are leaving me the bare minimum to do, making sure it has to be something special to beat me."

How long before the cry of "Boring, boring Villa" is heard? "After we got a point at United last week we were labelled dull and uncompromising. I don't object to the second part of that, but we were pinned in our half, like they do to you at Old Trafford. It's not as if we said: 'Let's see if we can get a 0-0 draw'."

Villa's defensive excellence begs the question of how high they might be if they possessed a Sheringham or a Shearer. The jury is still out on Savo Milosevic, their £2.5m striker, who happens to be from Serbia. Proud as Bosnich is of his ethnic roots, he stresses that the pair have no problems playing together.

"When Savo first came I outlined my position to him and he explained his. Obviously we've got fundamental differences but we get on well. Politics shouldn't come into it, even though it's hard because it's on the news every day. Our priority is to do well for Aston Villa."

Bosnich is doing exactly that, his second five-year plan apparently on schedule. Intriguingly, his chief rival to become the best in Britain may be his friend and opposite number tomorrow, Ian Walker, already a regular in Venables' squads.

The World Cup in 1998 would be the ideal platform for Bosnich to measure himself against the planet's safest hands. At the moment he sees

no one better than David Seaman and Peter Schmeichel, although Bernard Lama, of Paris St-Germain, and Angelo Peruzzi, of Juventus, also impress him.

In the meantime Villa have a world to play for themselves. After Spurs, the coming weeks pit them against Liverpool and Leeds, not to mention an awkward FA Cup tie at Sheffield United and the double-header

with Arsenal for a Wembley place.

"After that lot, we'll have a better idea of whether we can win something," Bosnich said. "The League is the one. Cups are great but I'd rather be in the top four after 38 matches. There's nothing more satisfying."

That evidently includes shutting out the opposition. "You can get into a trap of becoming

obsessed with clean sheets. Then, if you concede one, it can get you so upset it makes the rest of your game fall apart. You can play brilliantly and still let in a couple, so for me it's more important to be on the winning side."

Better, of course, to fly in the face of conventional wisdom than of an onrushing attacker. Either way, Mark Bosnich is clearly no ordinary goalkeeper.

Bosnich: "I'm much steadier now, more in control than I was"

Photograph: David Ashdown

Sellars to test Newcastle's title appetite

Guy Hodgson looks forward to a hectic Premiership programme this weekend

Scott Sellars has many qualities but timing is not among them. He might have two championship medals on display at home but he left Leeds United and Blackburn before the clubs won their titles and it seems likely that his move from Newcastle United to Bolton Wanderers will complete a hat-trick.

In fact the midfielder player is certain that his £750,000 transfer to Burnden Park last month will deny him a prize. "I can't see anyone stopping Newcastle," he said. "They were already the hottest favourites for years and the odds will shorten now they are out of both cup competitions. Newcastle could lose it but they would need a really sticky patch for the rest of the pack to catch them up."

No patch could be more adhesive for the Premiership leaders than a home defeat by the bottom side, Bolton, who have accrued just one point from 33 on their League travels. Against a Newcastle side who are chasing a 12th successive Premiership win at St James' Park, the Wanderers would appear to have about as much chance of succeeding as the Duchess of York becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Particularly as Bolton will be without Chris Fairclough and Gerry Taggart, who are suspended, which more than makes up for the likely absence from Newcastle's team of Les Ferdinand with a hip injury.

Newcastle will go 12 points clear tonight if they win because Manchester United do not play at West Ham until Monday although their assistant, Terry McDermott, was not counting points or chickens. "Anyone expecting an avalanche from us could be surprised," he said.

"Bolton have been unlucky recently with late goals denying them points. They are not as bad as people think they are."

Neither are Manchester City, although there will be plenty who

fear yesterday's purchase of Nigel Clough will be too late if they lose to the team immediately above them in the table, Coventry City, at Maine Road today.

Only Bolton have conceded more goals on their travels than Coventry but against that no team has scored fewer times than City. It is to address this failing that might see Alan Ball give a full debut to Martin Phillips, the 19-year-old winger who he has said could become England's first £10m player.

"A lot of our supporters have been wondering when I'm going to give Martin his first full game in the senior side," he said, "and he'll definitely be involved in some capacity."

If City were shocked to get five goals in the Cup against Leicester on Wednesday it was nothing to the raised eyebrows at Blackburn and Arsenal who surrendered to First Division opposition in midweek.

Arsenal get back to League business when they meet Everton at Highbury with their manager, Bruce Rioch, facing team selection problems. David Platt is out after a second knee operation in five months while centre-backs Tony Adams and Martin Keown will miss the game as they start two-match bans. Everton will have Duncan Ferguson available, after judgment on the judicial review of his 12-match suspension was reserved.

Changes in their line-up then, but maybe not as many as at Ewood Park where Ray Harford yesterday appeared to be running out of patience with players who have, in eight months, gone from playing for the championship to playing for pride.

"There was a complacency, lack of spark," the manager said about the 1-0 defeat by Ipswich. "I saw it early on and it became apparent to everyone else. Ironically it was the same team who had played so well against QPR last Saturday."

Arsenal v Everton

The Gunners wait for tests on Dixon (groin), McGowan (calf) and Winterburn (stomach upset) before naming their side. With Platt (knee) and David Thompson (groin) injured, and Adams and Keown suspended, manager Rioch fields Linington and Marshall in central defence. Everton should be unchanged as new signing Hodgson awaits a work permit.

Blackburn v Sheffield Wed

Sheff Wed could win a result for Rovers as Warburton and Fenton both have stomach bugs. Former England goalkeeper Woods plays for Wednesday as Pressman is again ruled out by a groin injury.

Chelsea v Nottm Forest

Hitchcock stays in goal for Chelsea as Whelan is still out with a groin injury. Norwegian defender Johnsen and midfielder Spelman are included in a 17-man squad. Campbell has recovered from a hamstring injury to take his place up front for Forest.

Liverpool v Leeds

Liverpool are expected to field an unchanged team, with Rush still on the bench. On-loan Chapman may drop down to the Leeds bench as Deane is back after a two-match suspension. Left-back Dorigo (hamstring) and central defender Johnson (thigh) face fitness tests, so Worthington, Beesley and Couzens are standing by.

Man City v Coventry

Ian Wrightwell is available after serving a two-match ban and could replace Ingram at left-back for City. Teenage winger Phillips is in the squad. Coventry's Rennie (calf) is a doubt.

Team news

Newcastle v Bolton
England's midfielder, who returns for Newcastle, but Ferdinand (back) is likely to join Honey (hamstring) in the St James' Park treatment room. Finnish striker Paatelainen scored for Bolton's reserves in midweek and is expected to lead their attack, but former Newcastle midfielder Thompson is not yet fit after a hernia operation.

Southampton v Middlesbrough

Walters will make his Saints debut after his free transfer from Liverpool, but Hennessey is again a doubtful starter because of an ankle injury. Middlesbrough's Brazilian forward Juninho is ruled out by a knee injury and player-manager Robson is doubtful with sciatica – but Barry has recovered from a knee ligament injury.

Wimbledon v QPR

Clarke could lose his Dons' place now that strikers Holdsworth and Gooden are fit again. Jones completes a four-match ban, while Sullivan is set to stay in goal as Hennessey and Seaton are still suffering from knee injuries. QPR welcome back midfielder Barker after a four-match absence through illness and suspension.

Aston Villa v Tottenham

Leading scorer Yorke has returned from his international duty with Trinidad and Tobago and should return for Villa tomorrow. Tottenham captain Malabuti is doubtful with a calf injury so, Calderwood could return. Midfielder Howells is also included in the squad after recovering from injury.

Unless your board provides the money, don't get promoted

Imagine the scene last June. Twenty-five minutes into the Premiership play-off at Wembley and Bolton are 2-0 down. Fifteen years of waiting to return to the elite disappearing before our moist eyes.

Ninety-five minutes later, we had won the game, the despair had changed to euphoria, and we looked forward to the start of the season with great anticipation – even though we had lost Bruce Rioch, then appointed joint-managers with a less than impressive record, and had not signed the strikers or full-backs we obviously needed. We did sign two centre-backs, however, to go with the three we already had.

Well, here we are in January and the reality has well and truly struck home. Visits to Liverpool, Aston Villa and even Manchester City have shown us just how far we are behind the elite teams in terms of facilities and footballing talent – although in the case of City, perhaps facilities only.

To compensate us for the increase in cost to watch our weekly humiliations, our board has, it must be said, made attempts to improve our image –

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Bolton Wanderers

DAVID EDGE

even if the team has not been improved (sorry Sasa Curcic, you are the exception).

A new 25,000 all-seater stadium, which will grace the Premiership, is due to be completed in 1997. Unfortunately it will house an Eidsleigh League side destined to spend the future years as nomads, "wandering" between the First and Third divisions, and it hurts. Boy does it hurt.

Frustration boiled over on and off the field. Our normally reliable centre-back, Gudni Bergsson – the Icelandic experienced a melt-down against Queen's Park Rangers and was sent off for the first time in his career. Fans have vented their feelings at our boring, stuttering and shambolic performances with after-match demonstrations, and who can blame them?

So where did it all go wrong?

Stand up the board, Roy McFarland and Colin Todd. Bruce left in June but the management "dream ticket" were not appointed until just before the start of the season. Tactics were changed and we purchased only two players with Premiership experience, both of whom were reserves at their previous clubs.

We have sold our only two midfield players who could tackle, and have seen the introduction into midfield of the manager's son, Andy Todd, whose idea of creativity is to mimic David Batty and pass the ball sideways or backwards.

The formation went from 4-4-2 to 3-5-2 and now 5-3-2. Unfortunately our "wing-backs", wretches as they are, lack the pace to make the system work.

But wait! Will things improve now that our board has finally seen the light and dis-

persed with the services of Mr McFarland? Maybe, but I hope fans of aspiring Premiership clubs will find the following pieces of advice useful.

1) Unless your board is determined to provide the money to purchase quality players and hold on to your best players, then don't bother getting promoted. It only leads to frustration and heartache. Let's be honest, us "true fans" only want our team to win. Believe me, it's no fun admiring the skills of Les Ferdinand as he puts two goals past you when you're bottom of the League.

2) Whatever you do, never, never, never appoint an ex-central defender as a manager. How many good Premiership managers are defenders? Robson, Fergie, Dalglish, Keegan, Francis, Rioch? Not on your life.

3) Be wary of your manager if he tells you that your two best players will definitely be staying at the club to help the Premier cause.

4) Don't prevaricate. It was obvious at Bolton four months ago that things were wrong. If swift and ruthless action is needed then take it. Time waits for no man. Nor does the Premiership.

Rangers to blood new Dutchman

Scottish football

Peter van Vossen, Rangers' new Dutchman, is unlikely to be given much time to discover Glasgow's myriad charms. Signed this week from the Turkish club Istanbulspor in a straight swap for Oleg Salenko, Van Vossen appears certain to be selected by Walter Smith as the champions face a resurgent Hearts at Ibrox today.

Rangers hold only a two-point advantage over Celtic at the top of the Premier Division, their Glasgow rivals having won their last two games. Smith will be without Paul Gascoigne, who starts a two-match ban, Stuart McCall and Derek McInnes, while Ally McCoist is rated only doubtful. Hence Van Vossen's hurried introduction.

Hearts have a doubt over John Robertson, but Gary MacKay will break the club appearance record, held by Henry Smith, by playing his 477th game.

Celtic travel to Rugby Park to confront Kilmarnock and face an anxious wait on the fitness of the influential Andreas Thom. Their hosts are likely to name an unchanged side for the third successive game.

GUY HODGSON

Nigel Clough put his pocket where his mouth is yesterday when he agreed to take a drop in earnings in pursuit of first-team football. He completed a move to Manchester City for around £1m, but will not be receiving the salary he enjoyed at Liverpool.

"He has taken a sensible decision," Alan Ball said, "and that impressed me. It shows me he is determined to pick up his career. I know him from my time working with the England squad under Graham Taylor. He is a very fine footballer and a likeable personality, too."

"Nothing moves faster on a football field than the brain and he has a very, very good mind," City's manager added. "I also want someone who can operate on the same wavelength as Georgi Kinkladze and I couldn't have anyone better."

While Clough was moving into Maine Road, Tony Coton was going out, joining Manchester United for £500,000. "I'm going to be No 2 to the best goalkeeper in the world, Peter Schmeichel," he said after five and a half years with City.

Clough takes pay cut to move to Maine Road

"A call from a club like United doesn't come around too often so when it does you have to be interested. The club has an aura, I wouldn't go to be No 2 anywhere else. To be at the right end of the table for the first time will be fantastic."

City are also still in the market for a left-back. "We have to tighten up there," Ball said. "We are working on getting another quality signing and have one or two irons in the fire." Last week he agreed a £750,000 fee for the Southampton United captain, Chris Powell, and, although the deal collapsed due to a disagreement over the terms of payment, it could be resurrected. However, the Danish international midfielder, Ronnie Ekelund, is returning to Barcelona after a loan spell at Maine Road.

The former England winger, Andy Sinton, yesterday returned to London by signing for Tottenham Hotspur for £1.5m from Sheffield Wednesday. The 29-year-old rejoins Gerry Francis – his former manager at Queen's Park Rangers – on a three-and-a-half-year deal, but has not been registered in time to play in tomorrow's match at Aston Villa.

Arsenal's John Hartson, Wolves' Eric Young, Sheffield United's Glyn Hodges, Paul Mardon (West Bromwich) and two uncapped strikers – Burnley's Kurt Morgan and Bristol Rovers' Marcus Browning – have all been called up. Gould has also dispensed with the services of his Under-21 management team, Brian Flynn and Joey Jones.

